ST. PATRICK'S PURGATORY;

AN

ESSAY ON THE LEGENDS

OF

Purgatory, Hell, and Paradise,

CURRENT DURING

THE MIDDLE AGES.

BY THOMAS WRIGHT, ESQ. M.A., F.S.A.

CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF FRANCE,
(ACADÉMIE DES INSCRIPTIONS ET BELLES LETTRES.)

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TO

JAMES HEYWOOD, ESQ., F.R.S., F.S.A.

&c &c.

This little Volume

IS DEDICATED,

AS A TESTIMONY OF SINCERE RESPECT,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

Preface.

A considerable portion of the following Essay—the first three chapters and a part of the fourth—was written out in a condition nearly ready for the press several years ago, when I was resident at Cambridge. Finding the manuscript accidentally among some neglected papers, I showed it to one or two friends, who encouraged me to complete and publish it. I have only to hope that my readers in general will not find reason to blame their partiality. I have been obliged to complete and print the volume very hurriedly, under disadvantages which I trust will be an excuse for the errors of a more trifling character.

It appears to me that the subject is not without interest, in whatever point of view we take it. I have treated it merely as a curious chapter of medieval literature. It might have been taken up as a ground of religious contro-

versy. And there is still another point of view in which these legends have their importance: compared minutely with one another and with the ancient penitentials, they would furnish most valuable materials for the statistical history of crime. By the researches and observations which I have made myself, I am satisfied that crime and vice were infinitely more prevalent and in their worst forms, during the ages of papal supremacy than at any other period of history, if we except, perhaps, the most degenerate period of the Roman Cæsars. I can add, both from my own observations, and from those of a friend who has passed much of his life in examining the judicial records of the English local courts, that the amount of crime diminished in our own country constantly from the Reformation to the end of the reign of Elizabeth; that it appears to have risen again very suddenly under James I and Charles I; that it began to diminish quickly again under the Commonwealth; and that, in spite of the immorality in the higher classes after the Restoration, the general morality of the people has been continually improving down to the present time. A series of researches carried on with the especial object of illustrating this subject would be exceedingly interesting; and the visions of purgatory would have great value in the age

when our judicial records are imperfect, because, by the proportioned scale of punishments in each, they would help to show the classes of crimes most prevalent at different periods.

The following pages have also their importance in a historical point of view. They show how, during the middle ages, the Christian religion was gradually corrupted by adventitious and superstitious legends. Nothing was ever more true than the stigma of idolatry applied by the earlier reformers to the religion of papal Rome. The Roman Catholic system was (and continues to be) a mixture of Christianity with Paganism, in which too generally the pure religion of the gospel is stifled under the weighty superstructure. Superstitions, such as those described in the present Essay, were at first tolerated among a newly converted and ignorant people; but they were subsequently approved and encouraged by a political priesthood, as a powerful instrument of domination and oppression, till they were finally accepted as an integral part of the doctrines of the church.

Although it has been my object to treat the subject generally, I have taken for the title of this Essay a special

case, that of St. Patrick's Purgatory in Ireland, because it is the most remarkable of all the purgatory legends, and it is the only one which has remained in force to the present day. Unhappy Ireland has suffered more, perhaps, than any other country from the religious system just mentioned. Romanism has been there for centuries a religion of sedition; and we may there contemplate, in as great a degree as modern laws and the condition of modern society will permit, the social evils which accompanied it in the middle ages. We see there a Catholic priesthood using the grossest means, and practising the most vulgar deceptions, to keep in ignorance and dependence the miserable population.

London, Nov. 28th, 1843.

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30, note *l.* 1, *for* 1273, *read* 1259.

St. Patrick's Purgatory.

CHAPTER I.

Lough Derg and its legends: story of the Hag with the Finger—Purgatory legends: St. Paul's vision—Furseus—Stories illustrative of the connexion between the English and Irish churches—Drihthelm—Vision of the emperor Charles—Ancient burlesque upon these visions—Anglo-Saxon notions of Purgatory, and of Paradise—The sea above the sky, and stories illustrative of it.

Among the dreary and barren mountains and moorlands in the south of the county of Donegal, at no great distance from the county town, is a lake which contains an island that was long famous throughout Europe. But who has not heard of St. Patrick's Purgatory?—of its mysterious wonders?—and of the crowds of devotees who have for ages been attracted by its reputed sanctity? There it stands, with its chapels and its toll-houses—and thither still repair yearly crowds of pious pilgrims, who would wash away at once, by a visit to these holy shores, the accumulated sins of their lives.

The lake did not always bear its present name, Lough Derg, or the Red Lake—it was, we are told, before the

arrival of St. Patrick on its banks, called Lough Fin, or Fin Mac Coul's Lake, and the cause of its change of name is still remembered in the legends of the neighbouring peasantry. Once there lived in Ireland an old hag, and a great giant her son, whose lives were spent in contriving and doing every kind of mischief. The witch, who knew the virtues of every herb that grows, brewed in a silver pot a baleful poison, in which the son dipped the points of his arrows, and which rendered mortal the slightest wound they inflicted. The mother was called the Hag with the Finger, for she had but one long and pliant finger on each hand. At this time there was a king of Ireland called Niul; and he called together his druids, and demanded of them by what means he might rid the land of these two pests. Their answer was, that one of the Fions only could destroy the hag, and that she must be shot with a silver arrow. The king immediately sent for Fin Mac Coul, the most famous and powerful of the Fions, who, with his son Ussheen (Ossian), and Gal Mac Morni, and Cuneen Miul, proceeded to hunt her. They found her and her son on a little green hill in East Munster, on which is said to grow every plant that is a native of Ireland; she was gathering deadly herbs, and had with her the pot in which she boiled them. As the party of heroes approached, Gal Mac Morni, who was foremost, shot an arrow at her, but, his aim being bad, he only overturned her pot and spilt the poisonous mixture which it contained. The giant, the moment he saw the pursuers, threw his mother over his shoulders, and fled with astonishing speed through woods and bogs; but before he had gone far from them, Fin had let fly his silver arrow, and pierced the old hag to the heart. Still the giant carried along with him his burthen, till he came to

the mountains of Donegal, when, stopping to take breath, he turned round and discovered, with astonishment, that nothing remained but her legs, her back bone, and her two arms, the rest having been worn away in his long flight through the woods. The giant threw down the remains of his mother, continued his flight, and was never heard of afterwards.

Some years after this, as the same party of Fions were hunting a broad-horned deer in that part of the country, they came to the spot where lay the bones of the hag, and as Ussheen, like a poet as he was, stood moralizing over her remains, a little red-headed dwarf made his appearance, who told them to beware of meddling with the old hag's bones, for in the thigh bone, he said, there was concealed a worm, which, if it once got out, and could find water enough to drink, would be likely to destroy the whole world. The dwarf disappeared, but his counsel was not regarded; for Cuneen Miul, who was a wild careless blade, broke the thigh bone with his hunting spear, and, truly enough, out crawled a long hairy worm, which writhed about just as if it were seeking for water. Whereupon Cuneen, taking it on the end of his spear, and exclaiming with a sneer, "there is water enough for you," threw it into the lake. Immediately there rushed out an enormous beast, so terrible, that all the party, heroes as they were, lost no time in hiding themselves from its fury, and the monster overran the country, spreading destruction on every side, and swallowing hundreds of people at a mouthful.

In this extremity, Fin Mac Coul had recourse to the oracular operation peculiar to himself of chewing his left thumb, and immediately he knew that the beast was vul-

nerable only in one spot, where was a mole on its left side; and armed with a short sword he hastened to attack it, and succeeded, by his knowledge of the position of the aforesaid mole, in disabling his formidable adversary. He left it struggling and bleeding on the shore of this same lake, its blood streaming down and colouring the waters—hence it was called the Red Lake. There the beast lay writhing and bellowing with pain, till Saint Patrick came and found it, and, to show the power of the faith he was preaching, ordered it to go to the bottom of the lake, where he effectually secured it. When the lake is ruffled by tempest, the monster is still sometimes seen rolling and roaring among the waves, to the terror of any solitary traveller who may chance to behold it as he hurries his way through the storm.

This, or some similar legend, seems to have existed at a remote period, for in the early part of the seventeenth century the rocks about the entrance of the island were shown as the entrails of a great serpent turned into stone, and "a certain knotty bone of some bigness, hollow in the midst like the nave of a wheel, and out of which issue, as it were, natural spokes," was said to be a part of the "great serpent's tail."* A multitude of medieval legends were founded upon geological phenomena.

But it was the legend of the cave on the island which made Lough Derg famous; a legend of so extraordinary a kind, that it cannot be considered a waste of labour to seek

* These bones, &c., are mentioned in an Account of St. Patrick's Purgatory, published, in 1617, by bishop Jones: the tail bone is mentioned by Messingham, in his Florilegium Insulæ Sanctorum, published in 1624, p. 96. The legend of the Hag was related to the Rev. Cæsar Otway twice. (Sketches in Ireland, p. 180, 192.)

after the materials on which it was formed, as well as its origin and its connexion with the place. The origin of the popular notions of purgatory during the middle ages, and of its situation, is not an uninteresting subject. The latter is immediately resolved into the original mythology of the people: the formation of the story of purgatory itself seems to have been gradual—it was a work of the imagination—and every artist who copied the picture added some fresh touches of his own. This we can easily understand, when we but consider the extreme love of metaphor which could make the writers of the middle ages talk of "the transparent eye-balls of virgin bashfulness," or "the purple flowers of modesty," or "the plentifull plantations of apple-trees fertilizing the mind with flourishing leaf!" Let us but imagine such phrases as "the dragon of gluttony," or "the shrubbery of pride," to be taken literally, and we have at once created no small part of purgatory.* But to see perfectly the development of the legend, we must trace downwards the different forms under which it has appeared at different times, we must in fact have its history. In the instance of which we are now speaking, the later legend of the place was founded on a mixture of legends connected with its physical character and the popular mythology of the ancient inhabitants.

The fables of western paganism furnished sufficient materials for the foundation of these legends. We have there a place of punishment (hell), of which even the name was

* These phrases will all be found in the writings of Aldhelm. The English writers seem to have far exceeded those of any other country in their partiality for such metaphors, and it is remarkable that nearly all the purgatory legends which exist are English or Irish.

adopted by the Christian missionaries, and a place of happiness, after this life. The former was a gloomy comfortless region, like the shades of the ancients—perhaps if we were better acquainted with the details of the Teutonic mythology, we should find there some of the torments of the hell of later times.* At the end of the Sæmundar Edda of the Northerns, we find a legend on this subject, entitled, the '*Solar-liodh*,' which presents an early mixture of the Christian and pagan doctrines of the west. A father appears to his son in a dream, and describes to him the state of the souls after death: he informs him, that after quitting the body, he first passed through the seven zones of the lower world; that he then came to the mouth of the abyss, where he saw multitudes of black birds as thick as clouds of flies—these were souls. He then describes the different punishments of various classes of sinners; impure women were seen dragging sorrowfully heavy stones; wicked men covered with wounds were walking along paths of red-hot sand; envious men had runes of blood imprinted on their breasts; those who had sought worldly pleasures were condemned to pass their time in painful pursuits which had no object; robbers, bending under burthens of lead, marched towards the castle of Satan; venomous reptiles gnawed the hearts of assassins; the ravens of Tartarus tore out the eyes of liars. The vision closes with a prospect of the splendour of paradise.† The primitive form of the legend is here probably smothered under the details of a comparatively late period.

* On the Hell and Paradise of the Teutonic Mythology, see Grimm, Deutsche Mythologie, pp. 461-76.

† See the end of the present volume.

The earlier visions of purgatory and paradise are distinguished from those which followed by the simplicity of their details. The first, of which we have any knowledge, is that of Furseus, which is alluded to by Bede, and must have been extremely popular amongst our Anglo-Saxon forefathers. There still exist manuscript copies of the same history which Bede saw, and which appears to have been written soon after the date of the vision.* In the tenth century it was translated into Anglo-Saxon, in the form of an homily, by Archbishop Alfric, the most celebrated literary man of his time; and we have a manuscript of it which, there are reasons to think, is in his own handwriting. Alfric introduces the subject by an allusion to a similar vision, said to have been granted to St. Paul; but he, as well as the other earlier writers who allude to this latter vision, pretend to no further knowledge of it than what may be gathered from the apostle's own words, who mentions a person that had been carried up in the spirit to the third heaven. Among the manuscripts of Trinity College library, however, there is a short relation, entitled "Visio sancti Pauli Apostoli de pœnis purgatorii;" it was perhaps a work of the twelfth century, when such legends were most fashionable. At the entrance of purgatory St. Paul saw growing fiery trees, on which people were hanging by their different members, or by their tongues, eyes, or hair, according to the crimes they had committed on earth. Within was a great furnace, with a dreadful fire, and beyond it a fiery lake. After having witnessed the operations

* One is in the Bodleian library, MS. Rawlinson, No. 505, fol. 174. Bede's account of Furseus will be found in his Hist. Eccl., lib. iii, cap. 19. The Anglo-Saxon legend of Furseus is printed in the 'Reliquiæ Antiquæ,' vol. i, p. 276.

of purgatory, he was taken to paradise to see the condition of the saints.*

* MS. Trin. Coll. Cant. O. 8. 26. Another copy occurs in the same collection, O. . . . . There appears to be a poetical version of the vision of St. Paul, in English, in the Vernon MS., in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Warton, in his History of Poetry, vol. i, p. 19, (8vo. edit. 1840,) quotes the beginning of it as an argument that these religious poems were sung by the minstrels to the harp on Sundays, instead of the romantic subjects usual at public entertainments:

" The visions of Seynt Paul wan he was rapt into Paradys.
Lusteneth lordynges leof and dere,
Ye that wolen of the Sonday here;
The Sonday a day hit is
That angels and archangels joyen i-wis,
More in that ilke day
Then any odur." &c.

The Anglo-Norman poetical version of this legend, of which there are several copies preserved in manuscript, (two, I believe, at Cambridge,) was written by Adam de Ros, an Anglo-Norman trouvère of the thirteenth century. The deeper the saint descends into the infernal regions the more terrible are the punishments. By the intercession of St. Paul and the angels, the torments of the damned are remitted every week from Saturday evening to Monday morning. This will explain why the English poem commences with the praise of Sunday.

There is a manuscript of the Anglo-Norman poem in MS. Cotton. Vespas. A. vii, illustrated with curious pictures of the punishments of the condemned souls. There are other MSS. at Oxford. The Latin original, which is brief, is found in the British Museum, MSS. Harl., Nos. 2851 and 3776, MSS. Reg. 8 C. vii, 8 E. xvii, 8 F. vi, 11 B. iii, 11 B. x, and 13 C. vi, and in various other manuscripts. The oldest copies are of the thirteenth century. The Anglo-Norman poem has been printed from an imperfect MS. in the Bibliothèque Royale at Paris, by A. F. Ozanam, Dante et la Philosophie Catholique au treizième siecle, 8vo, Paris, 1839, pp. 343-55.

Furseus was an Irishman, of a noble and wealthy family, and had been from his boyhood conspicuous for his piety. His love of contemplation led him to desert his father and his mother and all his kindred, in order to dwell in solitude as a stranger in a distant part of the land. Afterwards he built a monastery in the place which he had thus chosen for his abode, and placed in it a society of men pious like himself. On a time sickness fell on him, so that he was near death, and he wished to go home and die among his relatives. As he was carried thither by his companions, when he was not far from the end of his journey, and was singing the vesper hymn, he was suddenly surrounded by darkness, in the midst of which he beheld four hands stretched down towards him, which took him by the arms, and which seemed to be supported by four white wings. After a while his eyes became more used to the darkness, and he could distinguish the forms of two angels, to whom the arms and wings belonged, and then he saw that a third angel preceded them, armed with a white shield and a shining sword. And the angels sang sweetly as they went along, and their song was, "*Ibunt sancti de virtute in virtutem: videbitur Deus deorum in Sion.*"* Then after a while he heard hosts of angels singing above, and one of them came forward and ordered the armed angel, who preceded Furseus, to take his soul back to his body, which he did, to the soul's great dissatisfaction. After this, Furseus lay sick for two days, and on the night of the second day he seemed to die, and then the three angels came to him again and led him forth as before. And now he heard the howl-

* Psal. lxxxiii, 8, in the Vulgate.

ings and crying of demons, who were ready to stop his progress. Their bodies, as far as he could see them, were deformed, and black, and scranny, with long extended necks and swollen heads. They threw at him fiery darts, but they were all warded off by the angel's shield, and the devils were driven away. Then the angel told him to look down to the world: and when he looked down he saw a dark vale far below them, and in the vale four vast fires burning at some distance from each other. The angel said, "There are the four fires which will burn the world. The first fire burns the souls of men who have loved falsehood; the second, the souls of those who have been avaricious; the third, of those who have been stirrers up of strife and discord; and the fourth, of those who have practised fraud and impiety. Fear nothing; for these fires will only burn the souls of sinners." And thereupon they approached the fire, and it separated and left them a path through the midst. In the fire Furseus saw devils flying about, and fighting terribly, and some came and shot at him, and tried a second time to molest him, but were defeated by the angel who attended him. They now ascended again, and he beheld the hosts of angels and heard their songs. And there he met with two venerable saints of his own country, by name Beanus and Meldanus, who were in full enjoyment of the fellowship of the angels, and from them he heard much comfortable doctrine. He was then carried back by the angels through the fires and restored to his body.*

* We find an instance, in the twelfth century, of the story of Furseus being worked up and told again of a monk of Canterbury, which seems to show that the original story was not then so popular as it

After this vision Furseus lived among the Irish twelve years, preaching and declaring to them the wonders which

had been. This story occurs among some French metrical saints' legends, in a MS. in the library of Trin. Coll. Camb. marked B, 14, 39, of the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century.

" Dunc avint jadis à un prestre,
Ke de Canterbury ert mestre:
Quant lunges i out conversé,
Ci est cuntre lit cuché.
Quant il quida devier,
Devant lui vint un bachiler," &c.

The 'bachiler' took him to hell and to paradise, and he saw a great fire, which did not, however, burn him, and many burning souls, who howled terribly, and devils pursuing them with their 'crokes.'

" Ert li prestres en grant turment:
Quant il vint en le fu ben avant,
Este-vus un deble vint fort corant,
Les oils ardanz must roilant,
E de sa buche eschivant:
Un alme ardant en sun croc tint,
E vers le prestre grant curs vint,
E criebeit fort en sun eslels,
'Diva! treiturs fel mauvels!
Prene celui ke tu as tué!'
Cy at sur lui le alme rué.
L'alme descent sur le prestre,
E si li ard la paume destre,
Li arsun ke ad feit mal li feseit,
Ceo li fu vis murir deveit.

The mark of the burning remained, and was afterwards a proof of the truth of his relation.

An exactly similar accident happened to Furseus, except that the burning soul scorched not his hand but his shoulder and cheek. The soul was that of a sinner, from whom, while dying, Furseus had accepted a garment, and hence it was that this soul had power to burn him.

he had heard and seen. And then, unable to bear any longer the violence and envy of his countrymen, with a few of his companions he went to a small island on the coast, and thence, after a while, he passed over to Wales, and travelled through the territory held by the Britons to England, where he was honorably received by Sigebert, king of the East Saxons. To this people he preached the gospel zealously and successfully; and afterwards, on a plot of ground granted to him by the king, pleasantly situated near the sea and surrounded by woods, which was then called Cnofesburh or Cnobbesburh, now Burgh, in Suffolk, he built a monastery, which was afterwards adorned and enriched by the East Saxon king Anna. Thence, leaving his monastery to the care of his brother, he went over to France, where he was kindly treated by King Hlodowic, or at least by a man whom Alfred, in his translation of Bede, calls his 'ealdorman,' Ercenwald. He there died, and was buried at Peronne. The date of the arrival of Furseus in England is fixed by Bede to the year 633.*

We have another Irish version of the life of Furseus, which is published in the collection of the Bollandists,† in which the Irish origin of much of the history is manifested by the wildness of its details. His father's name was Phyltan, who was the son of Fundloga, king of

* In the Anglo-Saxon Menology, MS. Cotton. Jul. A. x, Furseus is mentioned at fol. 51, r°. where it is observed, "Þes Fursing ge-wat eft of Scottum on Brytone, and on East-Engla mægðe he ge-timbrade æger mynster þæt is ge-ceged Cnofesburh, ðæt he dyde on Sigeberhtes dagum þæs cyninges, and þanon he ge-wát ofer sæ in Gallia mægðe to Clodfeo Francna cyninge, and ðær his dagas ge-endade, and his lichoma resteð on ðæm tune Ferano, and his ge-earnunga þær wæron oft beorhte ge-cyþed."

† Acta Sanctorum, Januarii, tom. ii. p. 44.

Munster. Phyltan had been married privately to Gelgehe, the daughter of Aelfiud and the niece of Brendin, another Irish prince. The intercourse of this pair was secret, but the lady became pregnant, and her father, enraged at the discovery, condemned her to be burnt alive—the common punishment of her sex in the middle age romances. The infant in her womb bore his testimony against the judgment, declaring that it was "wrong for a man in authority to burn his daughter without sufficient cause." The angry judge persisted in his determination, and the offender was led to the place of punishment, where three fires instead of one had been made; but her prayers for the safety of her offspring were heard, and from the spot where her tears touched the ground a fountain suddenly arose and extinguished the flames. The heart of the father was somewhat softened by this double miracle, and the punishment of Gelgehe was commuted to banishment along with her husband. They went to Phyltan's uncle, the famous St. Brandan, who then resided in his monastery in the isle of Cluainfort, where he received them with kindness, and where the child was born. His sanctity was manifested, previous to his birth, by a supernatural light which surrounded the mother in her bed; and St. Brandon baptized the child by the name of Furseus, which was intended to be significant of the virtues with which he was endowed.

The circumstance of so many of the earlier visions of purgatory having been seen by Irish monks or by English monks who had resided in Ireland, makes it interesting to trace the intercourse between the two people.* From

* The authorities are Bede, who finished his history in 731; the Saxon Chronicle, which is brought down by various hands to 1154;

the very old metrical romance of 'King Horne' it would seem that the nations of the north of Ireland were friendly towards the English of the opposite coast: they kindly received the hero when a fugitive, and the 'Yrishemenne' readily assisted him against the 'Saracens' or pagan Danes who had invaded his own country. The romance of 'Tristrem,' on the other hand, seems to manifest a well-known feeling of enmity between the Cornish and the Irish of the south. This difference of feeling may perhaps be caused by the different ages of the two poems, 'King Horne' being without doubt of a much earlier formation than the other. But we trace something of the same kind in the historians and chroniclers, from whom it appears that the shores of the Severn were frequently infested by predatory parties of Irishmen. The ecclesiastical history seems to show a more friendly intercourse in the north. We might judge, from Bede's history, that Ireland owed very much of its Christianity to its Saxon neighbours. The history of the saints Colman and Cedda and Ceadda and also of Egbert belong almost as much to Irish as to English story. In 667 the first of these returned from England into Ireland, taking with him thirty Angles, and built a monastery in a small island on the west coast, called Inisboufinde, or the Island of the White Calf, and placed in the monastery both Irish and English monks. But the Irish then, as now, were improvident people: during the summer months they left the monastery to live on the

the history by Florence of Worcester, which closely follows the Saxon Chronicle in general, and which ends in 1118, and is continued by an anonymous monk of Worcester to 1141; and the Legenda Nova Angliæ, printed by Wynkyn de Worde, and published under the name of John Capgrave, but really composed by John of Tynemouth.

fruitful parts of the neighbouring coast, where they wandered about eating all they gathered, and then, when summer was ended, returned to share with the English the stores which the latter had been industriously laying up for themselves against winter. Discord soon appeared amongst them, and Colman left the monastery on the small island to the Irish monks, and took the English with him into Ireland, where they built a new monastery in a place then called Mageo, now Mayo. Here, at a later period, in the time of Adamnan, we are told that there were "a hundred Saxon saints." Adamnan himself was residing at the monastery of Coludesbyrig, now Coldingham, near Berwick, a short time before it was burnt, in 679. In 664 a violent epidemic raged over England, which also reached Ireland, where it proved very destructive. At that time it is incidentally noticed that there were in Ireland "very many Angles," as well of noble as of mean birth, some of whom went thither for religious instruction, and others that they might live there a quiet and a continent life. Some of them settled in a monastery and bound themselves to observe its rules, while others wandered from one to another, learning a little here and a little there, as they found instructors who pleased them. The Irish everywhere received them with hospitality, not only giving them to eat and drink, but lending them books to read and teaching them gratuitously.

In 684 Egfrith, king of the Northumbrians, sent an army into Ireland, under the command of his ealdorman Briht (or Berht), which committed dreadful ravages, sparing neither churches nor monasteries, among "a harmless people who," Bede tells us, "had always been most friendly to the English." The historian exults over the

punishment with which God visited the Northumbrian king, when the year following he was killed in a battle with the Picts, whose territory he had invaded, against the urgent remonstrances of St. Cuthbert, who had just been made bishop of Lindisfarne. Cuthbert himself, if we believe his legend, was an Irishman, and of royal blood. Muriardach, a rich and powerful king, who, in a manner, ruled over all the other kings of Ireland, was surprised in the night time by another Irish king, who envied his prosperity, and, with all his family excepting one daughter, put to death. The beauty of the princess excited the lust of the murderer: she was violated, and became the mother of Cuthbert. Another story is told in the same collection of legends. St. Guthlac was born in the days of Ethelred, king of the Mercians, who reigned till 704. Guthlac and Bertellin (? Berthelm) went together to Croyland. Bertellin, says the legend, was "son of the king of the people of Staffordshire;" fearing to be led astray by the wicked example of his own countrymen, he went when young to Ireland, and there was in great favour with an Irish king. His piety, however, did not render him proof against the charms of the young princess: she became pregnant, and he took her away secretly and brought her into England, where they concealed themselves in the most unfrequented parts of a vast forest. Here, when the time of her delivery approached, while Bertellin was gone in search of a midwife, a savage wolf came and devoured the mother and her child. Stung with remorse, Bertellin spent the rest of his life in solitary penitence.

Ireland once looked upon the English church as the mother and protector of her own. In 1073, the fourth year after Lanfranc was consecrated archbishop of Canter-

bury, Patrick came to London to be ordained bishop of Dublin, and took back with him from the archbishop letters to the kings of Ireland, whose contents were "very worthy to be held in memory." A few years after this Lanfranc sent to the Irish bishop Donald "letters filled with the fatness of holy doctrine;" and about 1085 he consecrated to the bishopric of Dublin the monk Donatus, at the desire of the king, the clergy, and the people of Ireland, who also carried back with him letters of exhortation. At the date 1121 the monk who wrote the continuation of the 'Chronicle of Florence of Worcester,' says: "This year a certain Irishman named Gregory, elected by the king, the clergy, and the people of Ireland to the bishopric of Dublin, came, according to custom of ancient standing, to be ordained by the archbishop of Canterbury, the primate of England." By the precept of the archbishop, Roger bishop of Salisbury, at his castle of Devizes, raised him to the grade of deacon and presbyter in the August of that year, and he was consecrated bishop shortly after by Ralf archbishop of Canterbury, at Lambeth. Before his return to Ireland he assisted at the consecration of the church of Tewkesbury.

Our next vision of purgatory, which is also related by Bede, differs considerably from the former, and is important as containing circumstances which are repeated in nearly all the later purgatory legends. Drihthelm was a Northumbrian, of the town of Cununing, perhaps the same which is now called Cuningham, within the borders of Scotland. He had lived a pious life, and in his later days was favoured with a vision like that of Furseus. On the return of his soul to its body he became a monk in the abbey of Mailross. He told his story to Hæmgils, from

whom Bede seems to have learnt it, and who, when Bede wrote his history, was a hermit in Ireland.*

When his soul first left its body, he said he was led in silence by a shining angel in a white garment. They went towards the north-east; and as they walked along they came to a valley which was broad, and deep, and infinitely long. One side of this valley was filled with roaring flames, the other side was not less intolerably cold,† with furious storms of hail and snow driving about in all directions. The whole valley was full of souls, who were tossed constantly from one side to the other, and were equally tormented in each by the heat and the cold, as well as by the foul spirits which were everywhere flying about. Drihthelm began to think this must be hell; but his conductor said to him, "Think not so, we have not yet come there." It was indeed only purgatory: so they went onwards, till they came into a region of extreme darkness, where he could hardly distinguish the shining form of the angel which accompanied him. And suddenly he saw as it were globes of dusky flame, rising apparently from a great pit, and constantly falling down into it again. When he approached it, his guide suddenly left him in the midst of the darkness, and he now saw that the globes of fire were full of souls, which were thus continually tossed up from the pit, the stench of which filled the country around. And as he stood terrified and doubtful which way to turn, he suddenly heard behind him a sound of miserable wailing,

* The vision of Drihthelm, like that of Furseus, was the subject of a homily of the Saxon church, of which a copy is preserved in a MS. of the public library of Cambridge, Ii. 1, 33.

† Extreme cold, instead of fire, is the common instrument of punishment in the northern legends.

and mixed with it laughter, "like that of churls exulting over their captured enemies." Then he saw a crowd of evil spirits dragging along five souls, who were lamenting grievously, whilst the fiends were mocking at them. When these had gone down into the pit, several fiends rushed out from the flames and surrounded Drihthelm: he was scorched by the stinking flames which issued from their mouths and their eyes and their nostrils, and they were on the point of dragging him into the pit with their red-hot forks, when suddenly a light appeared at a distance, which proved to be his former guide, who had come to his rescue. The assailants were disappointed, and fled. The pit was hell, out of which no one returned.

They now went towards the south-east; and there was a clear light, and before them a wall, which seemed in every direction of unbounded extent, and without any apparent gate or window. In an instant he was, he knew not how, at the top of the wall, and beheld a vast and pleasant plain, full of fragrant flowers, and the light was brighter than that of the sun at noon; and there were innumerable assemblages of people in shining vests, and all was joy and delight, so that it appeared to Drihthelm as though he were in heaven. But this was not heaven: it was the place where dwelt those who had done good works during their abode on earth, but were not sufficiently perfect to enjoy at once the immediate fellowship of Christ. After this he approached a country where the light was much brighter, and he heard beautiful singing, and perceived a smell of ravishing fragrance, when his guide suddenly stopped, and led him back by the way he went, after he had heard at a distance the songs of the saints of heaven.

The visions of Furseus and Drihthelm are the only two

mentioned by writers older than the Conquest; but we have in William of Malmesbury's history an account of a visit to purgatory by the emperor Charles the Fat, who came to the throne of France in 884. The simple fact of its being attributed by so late a writer* to Charles would not prove its antiquity; but there are some circumstances in it which seem to me to go far towards showing that it was written before the time of the Norman invasion. It appears in the form of a declaration under the emperor's own signature, and its object was to make over the crown after his death to his nephew Louis, which was done by the express order of his brethren in purgatory. Charles was deposed, Louis fled to England and was received at the court of Athelstan, and the throne of France was occupied by an interloper; but, after one or two brief reigns, Louis obtained the crown, and the vision of his uncle was probably the work of some monk of his party, who thought thereby to give additional weight to his claims.

"I was carried away," says Charles, "in the spirit: a very bright angel came to me, bearing in his hand a ball of thread, which emitted a bright ray of light, and he began to unrol it, and said to me—'Take the thread of the shining ball, and bind it and knot it firmly on the thumb of thy right hand, for by it thou shalt be led into the labyrinthine punishments of hell.'† He was led by the thread through deep vallies of fire, with innumerable

* William of Malmesbury's history ends in 1143.

† "Accipe pilum glomeris micantis, et liga et noda firmiter in pollice tuæ manus dexteræ, quia per illum duceris in labyrintheas infernorum pœnas." The allusion to the thread of Ariadne is sufficiently evident.

pits full of sulphur, and lead, and pitch, and oil. In these were punished bishops who had stirred up war between princes, instead of urging them to preserve peace; and they told him that there were pits prepared for his own bishops, who were still following their example. Then, while he was talking, several black fiends came and endeavoured to take the thread and pull him to them, but the light it emitted defended him. They next came behind him and tried to pull him into a pit with their fiery hooks, but his guide, who still held the ball, twisted the thread round him and over his shoulders, and dragged him away over fiery mountains, out of which issued scalding streams of boiling metal, in which stood people, some up to their hair, some up to their chin, and others only up to their navels. These were his father's nobles and their soldiers, who had made wars and used violence for the gratification of their avarice. There were also chaldrons of boiling pitch and sulphur, full of dragons and scorpions, and the souls in them were those of malicious and proud barons, who had given evil counsel to their king. Thence he was dragged to a valley, one side of which was dark and full of fires, and there kings were tormented by black giants; the other side of the valley was beautiful and pleasant. And next he saw two fountains, one of boiling water, the other pleasant and cool, and there was his father Louis, who passed a day alternately in each, the liberty of entering the cool one having been obtained for him by the intercession of St. Peter and St. Remigius, the patrons of the royal family: and he told him moreover, that if he and his bishops and priests prayed steadily, they would in time get him out altogether, and he would go to paradise. Then Louis showed Charles the two boilers which were

ready for him if he did not mend his life, at which he was much grieved, until he understood that he might be relieved by the same means. Charles was led to see paradise, and, as was right for such an emperor, only visited that part of purgatory which was especially set apart for the punishment of kings and princes, barons and prelates."

The vision of Charles, in its details, resembles more the later legends than those of Furseus and Drihthelm; and, from this circumstance, we should be led to suppose that many more such visions had been published at the time when it was composed than now exist. It affords us also an early instance of the corruptions of our western superstitions by the introduction of names and incidents from Grecian and Latin stories. However, the writer of this legend had evidently an imperfect idea of the use of the thread or the nature of the labyrinth in the classic fable.

But we have a much more convincing proof that before the time of the Norman Conquest, such legends were common as well in England as in the neighbouring parts of Europe, in the fact, that at the beginning of the eleventh century they had already become an object of ridicule. In a manuscript volume, preserved in the public library of the University of Cambridge, which bears internal evidence of having been written by an English monk in Germany about the middle of that century, among several Latin rhyming songs, there is one which tells the story of a "prophet" who had lately visited the infernal regions. Among other circumstances of their geography, he described them as surrounded on every side by thick woods. He had afterwards been to heaven, and there he saw Christ sitting and eating: Peter, he said, was head cook, and John the Baptist was butler, and served round the wine to the saints

in a glorious cup. On being pressed for an account of the repast which he himself had made there, our "prophet" confessed that in a corner of the kitchen he had stolen from the cooks a piece of liver, and after devouring it had slunk away. The delinquent was punished in this world for his offence in the other; for Heriger, the archbishop of Mentz, ordered him to be publicly flogged, advising him at the same time that "when Christ invited him to dinner, it would be well for him if he would in future keep from stealing."*

The doctrine of purgatory appears to be the oldest of those which distinguish the Romish from the Protestant churches. It is now generally known that the Anglo-Saxon church did not hold many of what are called the Romish doctrines, but, on the contrary, that towards the tenth and eleventh centuries its orthodox teachers opposed them as growing heresies. Purgatory, however, may be traced a long way back in the Anglo-Saxon divines. In Bede's time (the eighth century) it seems to have been a matter of speculation whether there existed such an expiatory place or not, but the two visions which the historian has recorded, perhaps went further than any reasoning to dispel the doubts which might exist. The Anglo-Saxon notions of purgatory, indeed, have generally these visions for their model. The earliest and most popular doctrine was that which was pointed out by Furseus, that in the end of the world the earth would be occupied by a great purgatorial fire, which would cleanse it from all sin, and leave it renovated and purified. This was the doctrine taught by Alfric. In one of his homilies he says, "God's

* This song will be found in the Appendix.

day will show them, for then he is manifested in fire, and the fire will prove what is the work of each of them. And he whose edifice lasteth through and withstandeth the fire, then receiveth the work-man from God reward of his work: if any one's work burns, he hath the harm of it, and so is still held through the fire."* But the vision of Drihthelm shows that already the more enlarged notion of a purgatory immediately after death was getting ground, and that the belief in the power of helping people through it by masses and the alms of their friends was beginning to be established. In Bede, the angel is made to say to Drihthelm, "The great burning vale which you saw is the place in which are punished the souls of those who, neglecting to confess and amend their sins till their last day, have been penitent at the moment of death. All, however, who have confessed and repented, even in death, will come to heaven at the day of doom. Many, however, are helped by the prayers of the living, and by alms and fasts, and above all by the celebration of the mass, so that they are delivered before doomsday." In a homily preserved in the Bodleian library at Oxford, (quoted in Soames's Bampton Lectures,) which is probably not much older than the beginning of the eleventh century, this doctrine is still more fully developed. "Some men's souls," it says, "go to rest after their departure, and those of some go to punishments, according to that which they wrought before, and are afterwards released

* "Godes dæg hí ge-swutelaþ, forþan þe hé biþ on fyre æteowod, and þæt fyr afandaþ hwilc heora ælces weorc biþ. Gif hwæs ge-timbrung þurhwunaþ and þam fyre widstent, þonne underfehþ se wyrhta edlean æt Gode his weorces. Gif hwæs weorc for-byrnþ, he hæfþ þone hearm, and biþ swa þeah ge-healden þurh þæt fyr." (MS. Bibl. Pub. Cantab. Gg. 3, 28, fol. 490.)

through almsdeeds, and especially through the mass, if men do these for them: and some are condemned with the devil to hell. They come never thence; and he who once cometh to rest will never come to punishments. The soul hath truly, even as books tell us, the likeness of the body in all its limbs, and it feels softness or soreness wherever it is, according to that which it earned before. Light crimes and little sins are then purged through the penal fire: and there is a punishment of no kind in this world so severe as that aforesaid fire which purgeth the negligent. Some are there long, some a little while, according to what their friends do for them here in life, and according to what they earned before in life. Each knows another, and those who come to rest know truly both those whom they knew before and those whom they knew not, because they were in good deeds before alike."

Many of the popular ideas which were held by our Saxon forefathers concerning the actual situation and appearance of purgatory, and more especially of paradise, are not easily to be accounted for, unless we suppose them derived from some of the sectarians of the eastern church. A manuscript in the British Museum furnishes the following information respecting the latter place: "Paradise is neither in heaven nor on earth. The book says that Noah's flood was forty fathoms high, over the highest hills that are on earth; and paradise is forty fathoms higher than Noah's flood was, and it hangeth between heaven and earth wonderfully, as the ruler of all things made it. And it is perfectly level both in length and breadth. There is neither hollow nor hill; nor is there frost or snow, hail or rain; but there is *fons vitæ*, that is, the well of life. When the calends of January commence, then floweth the well so

beautifully and so gently, and no deeper than man may wet his finger on the front, over all that land. And so likewise each month once when the month comes in the well begins to flow. And there is the copse of wood, which is called *Radion Saltus*, where each tree is as straight as an arrow, and so high, that no earthly man ever saw so high, or can say of what kind they are. And there never falleth leaf off, for they are evergreen, beautiful and pleasant, full of happiness. Paradise is upright on the eastern part of this world. There is neither heat nor hunger, nor is there ever night, but always day. The sun there shineth seven times brighter than on this earth. Therein dwell innumerable angels of God with the holy souls till doomsday. Therein dwelleth a beautiful bird called *Phœnix*, he is large and grand, as the mighty one formed him; he is the lord over all birds." And so the writer runs on in praise of the phœnix.*

The Anglo-Saxons appear to have been attached to these strange tales. In the dialogue between Saturn and Solomon, which is printed in Mr. Thorpe's 'Analecta Anglo-Saxonica,' one question, and its answer, are, "Tell me why is the sun so red in the evening?—Because she† looketh down upon hell." In a similar dialogue between Adrian and Ritheus, the same question occurs, and is similarly answered; and we have also another question,—"Tell me where shineth the sun at night?"—The answer is—"I tell thee, in three places: first, in the belly

* MS. Cotton. Vespas. D. xiv, fol. 163. It is a prose paraphrase of the pseudo-Lactantius *de Phœnice*. See the corresponding portion of the metrical paraphrase at the end of the present volume.

† Among the Anglo-Saxons, the sun was always *feminine*, the moon *masculine*.

of the whale, which is called Leviathan; and secondly, she shineth on hell: and the third time she shineth on that island which is called Glith, and there resteth the souls of holy men till doomsday."* Where such tales originated, it is impossible to say till we know more of them. Some may have come from the eastern Christians—others probably originated in a mixture of the preexisting myths of the Saxons with Christianity—and not a few from a too literal interpretation of scripture language. Of the latter class, we have a remarkable instance in the belief which prevailed during the midde ages, that there was actually a sea above the sky, which was founded on the mention made in Genesis of the separation of the waters above the firmament from those below. This belief is curiously illustrated by two legendary stories preserved by Gervase of Tilbury. One Sunday, he says, the people of a village in England were coming out of church on a thick cloudy day, when they saw the anchor of a ship hooked to one of the tomb-stones; the cable, which was tightly stretched, hanging down from the air. The people were

* "Saga me, hwær scyne seo sunne on niht?—Ic þe secge, on þrim stowum: ærest on þæs hwales innoðe þe is cweden leuiathan; and on oðre tid heo scynð on helle; and þa ðridda tid heo scynð on þam ealonde, þæt is Gliþ nemned, and þær restaþ haligra manna saula oð domes dæig." (MS. Cotton. Julius, A. ii, fol. 137, v°, printed in the Reliquiæ Antiquæ.) There are, in almost every language of Western Europe, collections of questions like these, which seem to have been intended to exercise the ingenuity of our forefathers. Among the Anglo-Saxons the interlocutors were generally Solomon and Saturn; in Germany and France, at a later period, they were Solomon and Marcolf the fool. A similar collection of questions were printed in a small black-letter tract, by Wynkyn de Worde, under the title of 'The Demaundes Joyous,' published also in the Reliquiæ Antiquæ.

astonished, and while they were consulting about it, suddenly they saw the rope move as though some one laboured to pull up the anchor. The anchor, however, still held fast by the stone, and a great noise was suddenly heard in the air, like the shouting of sailors. Presently a sailor was seen sliding down the cable for the purpose of unfixing the anchor; and when he had just loosened it, the villagers seized hold of him, and while in their hands he quickly died, just as though he had been drowned. About an hour after, the sailors above, hearing no more of their comrade, cut the cable and sailed away. In memory of this extraordinary event, says my author, the people of the village made the hinges of the church door out of the iron of the anchor, and "there they are still to be seen." At another time, a merchant of Bristol set sail with his cargo for Ireland. Some time after this, while his family were at supper, a knife suddenly fell in through the window on the table. When the husband returned he saw the knife, declared it to be his own, and said that on such a day, at such an hour, while sailing in an unknown part of the sea, he dropped the knife overboard, and the day and hour were known to be exactly the time when it fell through the window. These accidents, Gervase thinks, are a clear proof of there being a sea above hanging over us.*

This superstition was not confined to our islands. St. Agobard wrote against it in the ninth century. He tells us that the people of his time believed that there was a region named Magonia, whence ships navigated above the clouds, in which the fruits of our earth that were apparently destroyed and beaten down by tempests were carried, being

* Gervas. Tileb. Otia Imper. lib. i, c. 13.

sold to the sailors above by the exciters of the tempest. He adds, that he himself saw four persons, three men and a woman, in the hands of the populace, who were proceeding to stone them, because they believed them to have fallen overboard from one of the ships in the upper waters; but, after much reasoning, the ignorant and superstitious people "were confounded by the truth, as the thief is confounded when he is taken."*

* "Pleroseque autem vidimus et audivimus tanta dementia obrutos, tanta stultitia alienatos, ut credant et dicant quandam esse regionem, quæ dicatur Magonia, ex qua naves veniant in nubibus, in quibus fruges, quæ grandinibus decidunt et tempestatibus pereunt, vehantur in eandem regionem, ipsis videlicet nautis aereis dantibus pretia tempestariis et accipientibus frumenta vel cæteras fruges. Ex his item tam profunda stultitia excæcatis, ut hæc posse fieri credant, vidimus plures in quodam conventu hominum exhibere vinctos quattuor homines, tres viros et unam feminam, quasi qui de ipsis navibus ceciderint: quos scilicet per aliquot dies in vinculis detentos tandem collecto conventu hominum exhibuerunt, ut dixi, in nostra præsentia tanquam lapidandos. Sed tamen vincente veritate, post multam ratiocinationem, ipsi qui eos exhibuerant, secundum propheticum illud, confusi sunt sicut confunditur fur quando deprehenditur." (S. Agobardi Liber de Grandine, Oper. tom. i, p. 140, ed. Balus.) The reference in this last sentence is to Jerem ii, 26, in the vulgate version.

CHAPTER II.

Purgatory legends of the twelfth century—Vision of the child William, of Tundale—Devils and hob-goblins: story of Ketel the "elf-seer"—Vision of the monk of Evesham, of Thurcill, of Guy (spiritus Guidonis)—Burlesque descriptions of Purgatory and Paradise in the Norman fabliaux—St. Peter and the Minstrel—The court of Paradise—Land of Cocaigne—English Cocaigne—Cocaigne of the ancient Greek poets.

We first begin to hear again of visions of purgatory towards the middle of the twelfth century, when the story of the cave of St. Patrick was published. It is a curious circumstance, and one which I know not how to explain, that this century is the one in which our historians and chroniclers seem to have taken a pleasure in collecting and recording the fairy legends of the peasantry, with which the works of William of Newbury, of Gervase of Tilbury, and of Giraldus Cambrensis abound. The same period is also famous for purgatory visions, of which we have three in the single history of Matthew Paris.* Perhaps the legend of Owain, who entered Patrick's purgatory, which is one of the earliest of them, had made the subject popular.

* Matthew Paris finished his history in 1253. William of Newbury (Gulielmus Neubrigensis) wrote a history of his own time, 1136-98, prefaced by a brief history from the Conquest, of which there has been several editions. Gervase and Giraldus are well-known writers of the twelfth century.

'It has been already observed that the earlier legends of this kind were distinguished by simplicity of detail: the contrary characteristic is remarkable in those of the twelfth century, which are full of wild flights of imagination. Still we find that generally, as far as we can trace them with certainty, the sources of the adventitious incidents were Grecian and Roman. In a vision which I have only found in the 'Speculum Historiale' of Vincent of Beauvais,* who places it somewhere between 1143 and 1147, we have an incident borrowed from the story of Medea. A boy of fifteen, named William, was taken to purgatory, where, amongst other punishments similar to those so often repeated in most of the legends, he saw grown-up people placed in cauldrons and boiled till they became, in size and shape, to all appearance, newly-born babes. After being taken out with burning flesh-hooks, they recovered quickly their former aged appearance, and were again boiled, and this same process was continually repeated. After having passed through purgatory, William saw what Vincent calls 'Tartarus,' which seemed to be as much deeper than purgatory as the distance from London to Dover. In paradise he saw the child William, who had been lately cruci-

* Vincent of Beauvais (Vincentius Bellovacensis) was a voluminous writer of the middle of the thirteenth century; his works are a collection of extracts from all the writers he had read, under four heads, entitled, Speculum Naturale (treating on physics and natural history), Speculum Morale (illustrating morals by legends and tales, and extracts from older authors), Speculum Doctrinale (treating of the Christian doctrines), and Speculum Historiale (a chronicle). They were published together in four immense folio volumes, under the title of Bibliotheca Mundi. The vision of William is given in the Spec. Hist. lib. xxvii, c. 84, 85.

fied by the Jews at Norwich. This shows the story to have been of English origin.

The legend of Tundale is important to us, both because he was an Irishman and his vision preceded that of Owain, and because he was compelled, like the visitors of Patrick's Purgatory, to undergo punishments during his visit, which were to relieve him from their infliction after death. It is fixed to the date 1149, and from the numerous copies which remain, in Latin, French, and English—the latter metrical,—it must have been extremely popular.* Tundale

* The Latin legend is common among MSS. A very early printed copy is bound up in a volume of MS. Bib. Reg. in Mus. B., 12 B. xxiv, beginning, "Incipit libellus de raptu anime Tundali et ejus visione tractans de penis inferni et gaudiis paradisi." Several editions in Latin, German, Dutch, and French, appeared in the earlier ages of printing, some of them illustrated by singularly grotesque woodcuts. The Museum has lately bought a MS. containing a French prose version of the legend, which is numbered Additional MS. 9771. It commences thus: "Ci est contenu quelles sont les painnes et les tourmens d'enfer et la gloire de paradis si comme Tondalus j. homme le vit, et le raconta et la fist mettre en escrit pour le pourfit de ciaus qui la liront et oront lire: c'est verités." In this MS. the date is given wrong, "Mil.cc.xlix." The Latin is printed in Vincent of Beauvais, Spec. Hist. lib. xxvi, c. 88-104. The English metrical version occurs in MS. Cotton. Calig. A. ii, where it begins thus:

"Jhesu lorde of mygtes moste,
Fadyr and sone and holy gooste,
Graunte hem alle his blessynge
That lestenes a whyle to my redynge."

And again in MS. Bib. Reg. 17, B. xliii, fol. 150, where the first leaf of the poem is wanting. A very nice edition of this poem has recently been published by Mr. Turnbull, from a MS. in the Advocate's Library at Edinburgh, in an interesting volume entitled 'The Visions of Tundale; together with Metrical Moralizations, and other fragments of Early Poetry, hitherto inedited.' 8vo, Edinburgh, 1843.

was born at Cashel, and was by birth a nobleman. He was handsome and brave, but very proud, cruel, and wicked, and, instead of giving money to the church, he lavished it all in vainglory to jesters and 'jogelours'. One of his friends owed him three horses, for which, it appears, his only bond was his word as a knight. Tundale, at the appointed time, called on his friend for payment, who, after some introductory conversation, told him that he was not then able to pay his debt, and begged to be allowed a longer time. Tundale would have left the house in a rage, but his friend tried to pacify him, and at last prevailed on him to stay and dine with his family. While at table Tundale was struck by an invisible hand, and, after having earnestly commended his axe, to the care of his friend's wife, fell down to all appearance dead, and remained so from Wednesday till Saturday, when he revived and told his story.

When his soul first left the body it was assaulted by innumerable demons, but he was rescued by a bright angel, which was his guardian angel that had always attended him from his childhood.* After proceeding a long way with no light but the angel who led him, he came to a deep, dark valley, the bottom full of burning coals, on which was a great iron boiler, and in it the souls of parricides, fratricides, and homicides were melted, and afterwards,

* The belief in a guardian angel, who watched each individual through life, was general during the middle ages. See a Prayer to the Guardian Angel, printed in the Reliquiæ Antiquæ, vol. i, p. 35. I have seen it stated, in some English theologian of the middle ages, that each individual is accompanied from his birth by two angels, one good, the other bad, who attend upon him through life, endeavouring to gain him to good or bad pursuits, and who dispute and even fight for his soul at his death.

"which was still more grievous," strained as molten wax is strained through a cloth, after which they were again ready to undergo the same operation. Next he arrived at a great and horrible hill, where devils with hot iron hooks were tossing the souls of deceitful and treacherous people alternately into fire and ice. Then they came to a narrow bridge over a dreadfully deep, dark, and stinking valley, and he saw all who attempted to pass the bridge fall from it, except a holy palmer: this was the punishment of the proud. After passing the bridge, they went along a dark, crooked, and difficult path, till they came to a terrible beast, larger than any mountain, which with its mouth might swallow nine thousand armed men at once, and before it were multitudes of devils with their hooks and forks pushing the souls into his mouth. This beast, his conductor told him, was called Acheron, and he devoured all avaricious and greedy people, and he was himself for a time delivered up to the malice of the tormentors, till rescued by the angel, who led him to where there was a great stormy lake, full of monsters, and a long narrow bridge over it, planted all over with long sharp spikes, which pierced through the feet of those who attempted to pass.* Thieves were obliged to carry over this bridge whatever they had stolen, and the monsters in the water continued roaring at them all the way, and devoured them if they fell over. It fell to Tundale's lot to take over the bridge a calf which it appeared he had stolen: the calf, however, was unwilling to go, and as Tundale pulled, the calf fell down, and when it rose he fell, and he was grievously mangled with the spikes; and when he arrived at the middle of the bridge he met another soul, who was carrying over in the opposite direction a

* These bridges are also found in Eastern fable.

great bundle of stolen articles upon his shoulders, and neither would make way for the other, and there was no room to pass, so that they stood still, the spikes running through their feet, and the beasts roaring terribly at them, till the angel came and delivered Tundale. Then they came to a fiery furnace where, amid the flames, devils with terrible instruments were tearing people to pieces, and here Tundale also was tormented. Next appeared a fearful winged beast with a long neck and iron beak, who was seated on a frozen lake; and this beast ate up souls, which were digested in his stomach and reduced to nothing, and then they were ejected in the natural way into the lake, and became souls again; and during this process worms and serpents and other such vermin bred within them, and tore their way out, and so miserably tormented them. These were the souls of monks and canons and nuns and other ecclesiastics who had given themselves up to luxury and had not led holy lives.* They next came to the "vale of smiths" (*in vallem fabrorum,*) where they saw smithies, whence issued terrible lamentations. Then the angel said, "This tormentor is called Vulcan, by whose contrivance many are ruined, and are afterwards tormented by him." When a soul came here the smiths took him with their tongs and put him in the fire and blew with the bellows till he was melted nearly into a fluid; then they took him out and placed him on the anvil and beat him with hammers, and thus they beat many souls into one mass, like as our smiths make one piece of iron out of many small fragments. And then it was passed on to other forges, where

* This incident appears to have given Chaucer an idea for one of the incidents in his Canterbury Tales. See the Sompnoures Prologue.

other smiths went to work upon it. This was the end of purgatory.

Tundale found the pit of hell just as it had been described by Drihthelm, but he saw more of it. The evil spirits were black as coals, their eyes like burning lamps, their teeth whiter than snow, they had the tails of scorpions, sharp iron claws, and vultures' wings. The prince of hell was a black gigantic monster, about a hundred cubits high, and ten cubits broad, with more than a thousand hands; his claws were of iron, and were longer and thicker than the lances of knights, and his beak and tail were equally terrible. He was bound down on a kind of large gridiron, and an innumerable multitude of fiends were at work with their bellows blowing the fires that were under him. In his agony he stretched out his hands, and took handfuls of souls, and crushed them in his fingers like a man crushes grapes when he would squeese out their juice. And he remained thus, ever tormented and tormenting. "This," said the angel, "is Lucifer, who was expelled out of paradise for his pride. He is called prince of the shades, not because he has power there, but because his punishment is the prime punishment of all—the others being but as nothing in comparison with it."

Tundale afterwards passed a great wall, and came to a place where were the souls of those that were neither very good nor very bad. Here were multitudes of people, who were destined to pass in time to a better place, but they were at present very uncomfortable; the climate was always rainy and windy, and they were sorely grieved with hunger and thirst. After this he came to a large and fair field, very light and pleasant, and full of sweet-smelling flowers. The sun never set, and there was a fountain of living water,

out of which if a person once drank he would never thirst again. These people were better than the former, or had already expiated their sins. Tundale saw many people whom he had known, and particularly the kings Concober and Donatus, who had been cruel and unjust, but who had spent their latter days in penitence. And a little further on he saw his own king, Cormack, enthroned in a palace of gold and gems, in great splendour and honour, but compelled once every day to undergo punishment for the grievous sin of 'spouse-breach.' Hence Tundale and his guide proceeded till they came to another great wall without any gate; but he was suddenly, without knowing by what means, at the other side, where was the glory of the saints, and there was dancing and music and fine living; but he was not permitted to stay there long.

The allusion to the classic Acheron in the foregoing legend, the transformation of the lake of the Grecian fable into a beast, and the no less remarkable perversion of the story of Vulcan and his Cyclops will not fail to strike the reader. The description of Satan or, as he is here called, Lucifer, is also curious. In the old popular creed devils were not the tormented but the tormentors; they were a class of beings naturally malignant, who hunted after the souls of sinners, and enticed people to sin, with the sole object of gratifying their own delight in punishing. Lucifer was a fallen angel, only distinguished by the extreme severity of his punishment and seldom had any important part assigned to him in popular legends. The devils of our monkish legends were, in fact, nothing but hobgoblins: they were the wild spirits of the old and established creed of the peasantry, in which the monks and teachers of the Christian religion, influenced in this matter by strong prejudices, did not venture to disbelieve, but themselves

supposed, and taught others the same doctrine, that the old elves were beings whose business it was to plague and mislead mankind. In William of Newbury we have a story of a Yorkshire rustic named Ketel, who might very properly be called the 'elf-seer.' As he was one day while young riding on his beast from the field, the latter suddenly stumbled, although the road seemed perfectly level and smooth. When Ketel, who had been thrown to the ground, arose, he saw, sitting by the road side and laughing at him, two little black people, whom he soon discovered to be hobgoblins, and he found that they had no power of doing further injury than playing such mischievous pranks. Thenceforth he had the power of seeing all such spirits whenever he came near where they were lurking. One day he saw a party of hobgoblins driving a covered cart, out of which issued groans and lamentations, whilst the drivers were laughing with great glee. Ketel asked them what they had in the cart; and they told him readily that they were carrying a cart-load of the souls of sinners, whom they had deceived and caught, to their place of punishment. They added that they should watch the first opportunity of serving him in the same way, for it seems the faculty which he had acquired had rendered him especially obnoxious to them. Ketel used to say that there were some hobgoblins which were large, strong, and cunning, and which had power to do much mischief; while others were small and contemptible, weak and foolish, and these were greatly delighted if they could only plague a person ever so little. He often saw these latter sitting by the highway and making people stumble, and then laughing at them. Some people, he said, had the laudable custom of ejaculating the name of Christ whenever anything surprised them, which always drove away the hobgoblins for

the time. Many other curious things did Ketel tell, for he was a pious man, and took as much delight in plaguing the hobgoblins as the hobgoblins did in plaguing other people.*

Matthew Paris tells us that in the reign of Richard the First† a monk of Evesham lay in a trance during two days, and was supposed to be dead, till suddenly beginning to revive, he was heard to exclaim with great earnestness, "O holy Mary, O holy lady Mary! for what sin of mine must I be deprived of so infinite happiness?" after which he burst into a flood of tears. He afterwards told his adventures to his brethren. Immediately when he became insensible to what was going on in the natural world around him, a person took him by the hand and led him along a level path towards the east, until they came to a spacious country, which was horrible to look upon, full of mud and marshy ground. There he saw an immense number of people, or rather of ghosts of people, of every age, sex, and condition, all exposed to the most dreadful torments. They were collected together in troops, according to the nature of their crimes, but all who were there had hopes of reaching heaven, sooner or later. As their own penitence or the prayers of their friends assisted them, they were removed from greater torments to less, until at last they became entirely purified. The punishments were numerous and various: some were

* Guil. Neubr. Hist. Angl. lib. ii, c. 21.

† Vincent of Beauvais (Spec. Hist. lib. xxix, c. 6-10) describes the vision of purgatory and paradise manifested to a Cistercian novice, in England, about 1153, which, however, has nothing very remarkable about it, except that the visitor was taken first to paradise, and afterwards to purgatory, contrary to the order observed in all the other legends.

roasted, others were frozen: some again were torn asunder with red hot pincers, while others were dipped in baths of boiling pitch or sulphur, or of molten brass and lead. Some were eaten by monstrous worms, or laid upon staves full of glowing spikes. This was the first place of purgatory. They next came to another place of punishment, a deep and dark vale, separated from the former by a range of lofty mountains. The vale appeared to be occupied by either a lake or a river, he knew not which, for there arose from it a mist with an intolerable stench. One side of the vale was bounded by furious fires, on the other was always intense cold, made more unbearable by constant and dreadful storms of hail and snow. Souls were here punished by being first thrown into the stinking water, thence into the fire, and from that into the cold, and again into the water and fire; and thus they gradually proceeded from the end of the vale at which they first entered to the other, the punishment becoming always less the further they proceeded, but the least punishment in this being far greater than the severest in the first purgatory. The multitude of people in it are compared to the swarm of bees in a hive, and our monk saw there very many of his own acquaintance. The third place of punishment was a vast plain in "a certain dark corner of the earth, which seemed inaccessible to any but the tormenting devils and the tormenting souls." It was covered by a "vast and horrid chaos," amid which rolled clouds of sulphureous smoke, with dark pitchy flames, emitting a dreadful stench. The plain was covered with worms (serpents) beyond all imagination monstrous and deformed, breathing flames from their mouths and nostrils, and greedily tearing the wretched sufferers. Devils, too, were running about like

madmen, tearing them to pieces with fiery pincers, now "scraping their flesh from their bones," now melting them in the fire and pouring them out like liquid metals. Other punishments they underwent, too great to be described. The punishments in this place were never diminished, and they had no end.

As our monk had seen three places of punishment, so he afterwards saw three places of happy souls. When he had passed through the extreme place of torments, suddenly there began to appear a little light, and presently after this he began to feel a most sweet smell, and then his guide brought him to a vast and pleasant plain, sprinkled everywhere with beautiful flowers. Here they saw thousands of thousands of souls, who were rejoicing after having passed through the various degrees of punishment which had fallen to their lot. In this first place of joy, the souls were dressed in garments which, though not spotted or dirty, were only of a dull white. Here the monk met many of his old acquaintance. Beyond this was another plain, where the light was more glorious, the flowers more beautiful, their fragrance more ravishing, and the joy more exquisite. The souls here had lived on earth a more innocent life than the former, and had passed through the punishments of purgatory much more quickly. They had white and shining garments. The third place of joy was heaven itself, separated from the second by a wall of crystal, of infinite extent; at the gate of which were crowds of souls waiting for admittance.

The monk visited purgatory in 1196. Ten years later, the same historian tells, that a hospitable husbandman, called Thurcill, of a village in Essex, which was then called Tidstude, was taken thither by St. Julian, the "hospitator,"

having, as a matter of convenience, left his body in bed. They went towards the east, and when they had come to "about the middle of the world," they entered a large and glorious hall, supported by three pillars. This was the court to which souls went immediately after leaving the body, and hence they were sent either to hell or to purgatory. Near this hall was a place of punishment for those who had been slow in paying their tithes. Not far from it, between two walls, was the fire of purgatory, the overseer of which was St. Nicholas. Beyond the fire was a pond, very salt and cold, in which the souls who had passed through the fire were dipped, apparently for the purpose of cooling them, some more and some less, according to the extent to which they had been scorched. Next there was a great bridge, covered with nails and spikes, which led to the mount of joy, where was a church large enough to contain all the people of the world, and a soul had no sooner entered it than he immediately forgot all the torments of purgatory. Thurcill now returned to the hall, where was St. Michael, with Peter and Paul: the souls which were perfectly white came under the charge of Michael, who sent them unhurt through the flames to the mount of joy; those which were spotted, black and white, were sent into purgatory by Peter; and St. Paul and the devil sat one at each end of a large pair of scales, in which were weighed the black souls. When the scale turned to the saint, he sent the soul who was in it to purgatory; when the other scale was heaviest, the devil and his attendants with a malicious grin, threw him into a fiery pit, whose mouth was just by his feet.

Now it happened one evening as Thurcill was standing in the hall with St. Julian and St. Domnius, that a devil

came riding furiously upon a black horse, who was received by his companions with great triumph and exultation. St. Domnius compelled the fiend to tell him whose soul it was that he had so transformed, and that he had tormented so with his riding. He answered, "It is the soul of a peer of England, who died last night without confession or receiving of our Lord's body;" and said that, at the instigation of his wife, he had cruelly oppressed his people, to the utter ruin of many of them. Presently, the devil, turning his eyes upon Thurcill, inquired of the saints, "Who's this?" "Dost thou not know him?" said one of them. "Yea," said he, "I saw him in the church of Tidstude, in Essex, at the time of its consecration." "How went you in?" said the saint. "In the garb of a woman: by the same token that coming near the font, as I was going into the chancel, I met the deacon, who, sprinkling me with holy water, so terrified me that with a loud scream I leapt at once into a meadow full two furlongs from the church." And Thurcill declared that he and others had heard the noise, but they were entirely ignorant of the cause.

At this period, it seems, the devils took much delight in stage plays. St. Domnius hinted to this devil that they had a desire to see these performances. "Very well," said the devil, "but mind, we must not have that countryman with us, for he will certainly go home and publish all our secrets." "Go on, then," said the saint, "and I and Julian will follow." But they took care to introduce Thurcill slily, hiding him between them. And they went into the devil's theatre, which was surrounded with seats for the convenience of the imps who would enjoy the spectacle. The saints stood on a low wall near the entrance,

from which they could see all that passed. First, on the stage, appeared a proud man, strutting about and acting to the life all the arrogance and vanity which had distinguished him in this world: when the spectators had sufficiently enjoyed their mirth at his behaviour, suddenly his gay garments were transformed into flames about him, and, miserably scorched and tormented, he was thrust back to his place of punishment. Then entered a priest who had neglected his duties: his tongue was torn up by the roots, and he was then subjected to the same torments as the former. Next came a knight, armed and mounted on a black horse; but, in spite of all his boasting and his formidable appearance, he was quickly dismounted by one of the fiends. Then appeared a lawyer, who was obliged to act over his former deeds, pleading on one side, while he was taking bribes on the other: on a sudden the fees which he had thus taken became boiling metal, and he was compelled to swallow them. Afterwards were exhibited a long succession of offenders, including adulterers, back-biters, and thieves.

After showing him other punishments, and also the dwellings of those who were gradually mounting to superior happiness, the saint led our rustic to a place all bedecked with infinite variety of flowers and herbs, with a clear fountain spreading out into four streams of various liquor and colour. Upon this fountain stood a beautiful tree of vast extent, and immensely high, affording all kinds of fruits. Under the tree, and near the fountain, lay a man of gigantic stature and graceful mien, with a vest of various colours and wonderful beauty, reaching from his breast to his feet. This man seemed, as he lay, to laugh with one eye and to weep with the other. "This," said

St. Michael, "is Adam, who by his smiling eye testifies the joy he receives from the glorification of his descendants who are to be saved, and, by the weeping eye, his sorrow for those who merit everlasting punishment. His garment, which is not a complete vest, is the robe of immortality and glory, of which he was stripped at his first transgression, but he began to receive it again from Abel, and till now, through the whole succession of his righteous descendants. When the number of the elect shall be complete, he shall be entirely covered with this robe, and the world shall be at an end. Its various colours denote the different virtues by which the righteous are saved." After having had a view of the dwelling of the blessed, where he saw St. Catherine, St. Margaret, and St. Osyth, Thurcill was carried back to his own home.

During many years after the date of the vision of Thurcill, our forefathers seem to have been contented with transcribing and repeating the legends of the twelfth century, and new visions of purgatory were very uncommon. Before the end of the fourteenth century I have seen but one, that of Guy in 1323, which in the manuscripts generally bears the title *De Spiritu Guidonis;* and that is not properly a vision, and has little connexion with our present subject. It was, however, once popular, and besides many copies of the original narration in Latin, we find an English metrical version, written in a rather northern dialect.* Guy lived at the town of Alost,

* Among the Cottonian MSS. there are two copies of the Latin legend of Guy's spirit, one in Vesp. A. vi, fol. 138; the other, which is older and better, in Vesp. E. i, where it ends thus: "Explicit quedam disputacio mirabilis inter priorem fratrum predicatorum de civitate Alcestie [Aleste, al.] que distat a curia apostolica que vocatur

some twenty-four miles from Avignon, in the south of France. He died, and was buried; but, instead of keeping quiet in his grave, the spirit of Guy came to visit his widow. She applied to the prior of the Dominicans, who, having provided himself with the pyx, proceeded to the haunted house.

" And al samyn[1] so thai went
To Gyes hows[2] with guide entent;[3]
And in that hows said thai and he
Placebo withe the *dirige*
For his saul that was husband thare,
And for all saules that sufferd care.
When all wns said in gud degré
Till[4] *requiescant in pace*,
Thai herd a voice cum tham biside,
Als[5] it did at that other tide,[6]
Like a besom by tham it went
That war swepeand[7] on a pament:[8]
Sum of the folk tharfore war flaid."[9] (fol. 100, v°.)

[1] together
[2] house
[3] good intention or object
[4] to
[5] as
[6] time
[7] was sweeping
[8] pavement
[9] some of the people were terrified thereat.

Avinonia per xx^ti. iiij. miliaria, et inter spiritum cujusdam civis civitatis ejusdem nomine Guydo, qui obiit. xvj. kl. Decembris anno Domini millesimo tricentesimo vicesimo tercio." The English version, which is a close paraphrase of the Latin original, is in MS. Cott. Tiberius, E. vii, fol. 90, and commences thus:

" Saint Michael goddes angel clere,
And Saint Austin the doctur dere,
And other maisters mare and myn,
Said that men grete mede may wyn,
And nameli clerkes that can of lare,
If thai thaire cunyng will declare."

After this the prior has a long conversation, or controversy, with the invisible spirit, which is conducted with much of the style of scholastic divinity, and turns upon purgatory and the doctrine of transubstantiation. Its object seems to be more especially to enforce the last of these doctrines.

Among the gay and witty writers of the fabliaux and romans, who kept up a constant fire at the vices of the clergy and the absurdity of some of their doctrines, the details of the purgatory visions could not fail to afford a frequent subject for pleasantry and burlesque. This burlesque was also sometimes unintentional; for, in the minds of the poets and professors of the "gai science," there was a strange mixture of earthly feelings and passions with heavenly, of love and chivalry with religion, which was constantly creating pictures that, to say the least, were extremely ridiculous. Indeed, the legends of the monks themselves have frequently the same character. A fabliau which is printed in the collection of Barbazan, relates the visit to hell, and his departure thence, of the soul of a 'jogelour' or minstrel, who had spent his days in dissipation. One of the fiends who were hunting about the earth to take souls, caught that of the minstrel as it left his body, which he threw over his shoulders, and instantly hastened home.* All the demons returned at the same time with their prey.

"Li uns aporte champions,
L'autre prestres, l'autre larrons,

* The characters of the fiends themselves were often objects of parody and burlesque. We may instance the fabliau Dou Pet au Vilain, in Barbazan, vol. iii, p. 67.

Moines, eveques, et abez,
Et chevaliers, et genz assez
Qui en pechié mortel estoient,
Et en la fin pris i estoient.
Puis s'en reperent en enfer,
Lor mestre truevent Lucifer."

"Some carried champions, others priests, others thieves, monks, bishops, and abbots, and knights, and people enough who were in mortal sin, and were taken therein at their end. Then they betook themselves to hell, and found their master Lucifer." When the demon who carried the minstrel laid down his burden at the foot of Lucifer, the ruler of the shades questioned the latter on his past character. He was, he said, a poor minstrel; he was thankful for the shelter which he had given him in his dominions, and, as the only means he had of showing his gratitude, he would sing him a song. Lucifer declined the minstrel's offer, but, in pity for his forlorn appearance, gave him employment to blow the fire under one of his cauldrons.

"Un jor avint que li maufé
Furent leenz tuit assemblé;
D'enfer issirent por conquerre
Les ames par toute la terre."

"It happened one day that the evil ones were all assembled within; they issued from hell to conquer the souls through all the earth." Lucifer left the minstrel to take care of the infernal regions, and promised, if he let no souls escape, to treat him on his return with a fat monk roasted, or an usurer dressed with hot sauce. But while the fiends were away, St. Peter came in disguise, and allured the minstrel to play at dice, who, for lack of money, was so imprudent as to stake the souls which were

left under his care. They were all lost, and carried off by St. Peter in triumph. The devils returned, found hell empty and the fires out, and very unceremoniously sent the minstrel away, but he was generously received by St. Peter. Lucifer, in his wrath, threatened with severe punishment any fiend who should again bring there a minstrel's soul, and thus they ever after escaped the claws of the evil ones.*

In another fabliau, entitled *la Court de Paradis*, Christ determines to hold a full court on All Saints' day, and orders St. Simon and St. Jude to summon a full attendance.

"Alez m'en tost par ces dortoirs,
Et par chambres, et par manoirs,
Semonez moi et sains et saintes,
Dont il i a et mains et maintes:
Gardez que nus n'en i remaigne;
Chascuns amaine en sa compaigne
Toz ses compaignons sans delai."

"Go hence all through the sleeping-rooms, and through the chambers, and the manors, summon to me the saints of both sexes, of whom there are many there; take care that none of them remain; let every one bring in his company all his companions without delay." In one chamber they found Gabriel and all the angels, "qui à merveilles furent bel;" they promised to attend, and St. Simon next summoned all the patriarchs, who were in another room, with Abraham at their head. Next he

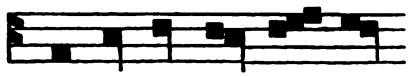
* Such burlesque tales as this were not uncommon in the middle ages, and we find them still among the German popular legends. Examples will be found in the collections of tales and legends by the brothers Grimm.

summoned the Apostles, and then the martyrs who were led by St. Stephen, to come to the high court, "où la fontaine d'amors sort." He afterwards met St. Martin, and all the confessors and the Innocents, and then—

"Tant a alé et çà et là,
Qu'en une chambre s'en entra:
La chambre estoit merveille bele,
Dedenz avoit mainte pucele,
Et chascune estoit coronée
De gentil corone esmeré,
Tant riche, tant bele, et tant cointe,
Langue, tant soit de parler cointe,
Esmolue ne afilée,
Ne vos diroit mie denrée
De la biauté que celes ont,
Qui leenz herbergiez sont.
C'est chambre de virginité,
Leenz avoit moult de biauté."

"He had gone so far here and there, that he entered into a chamber; the chamber was wonderfully beautiful; within was many a virgin, and each was crowned with a fair crown of pure gold, so rich, so beautiful, and so elegant, the tongue, be it ever so eloquent, be it smoothed or filed to ever so fine speaking, could not tell you a small portion of the beauty which these had, who were harboured within. It is the chamber of virginity, and within it there is much beauty." After this Simon met those who had preserved their widowhood, who "were so polite, and so elegant, and so pretty, and so beauteous, as no tongue can tell;" and then appeared the married ladies: and all the ladies were summoned very politely. And so the inhabitants of paradise all came to the court in troops,

hand in hand, the angels singing "*Te Deum laudamus*" to a tune which the manuscript carefully sets forth in musical notes—



Te De - um lau - da - mus.

The other parties sung different songs, alluding more or less to the subject of faithful love. The widows were elegantly dressed:

"Bien sont les vueves atornées,
De riches mantiaus afulées,
Tant riches, tant cointes, tant biax,
Que mieus en vaut uns des tassiaus,
Que ne fait tout li ors d'Espaigne."

"The widows were well attired, covered with rich mantles, so rich, so elegant, and so beautiful, that one of the tassels was of more value than all the gold in Spain." And when they were all assembled, they had a great feast, and a dance, and singing, and they were in great happiness.

"En tel maniere tuit chantoient,
Et toutes les armes ploroient
Qui erent en espurgatoire."

"While they were so singing, all the poor souls in purgatory were lamenting;" and they sent up an urgent prayer to Christ for deliverance. St. Peter chanced to hear their cries, while all the people in paradise were making merry, and he pleaded their cause before Christ and the Virgin, and then all the ladies prayed for them, and particularly Mary herself, and Christ kissed her, and granted her petition. St. Michael, accordingly, went to

fetch the souls from purgatory; St. Peter opened the gate for them, and there was great joy in paradise.

There is a very capital burlesque on the paradise of the monks, and all the good things it contains, as well as a witty satire on the lives of the monks themselves, under the character of the land of Cocaigne, a word which may perhaps be best translated by "cookery-land." The poet pretends that he had been sent on a pilgrimage by the pope, and in the course of his wanderings he had reached this land, where he saw very many wonders.

"Qui plus i dort, plus i gaaigne:
Cil qui dort jusqu'à miedi,
Gaaigne cinc sols et demi.
De bars, de saumons, et d'aloses
Sont toutes les mesons encloses;
Li chevron i sont d'esturgons,
Les couvertures de bacons,
Et les lates sont de saussices."

"In that place the more one sleeps the more he gains; he who sleeps till mid-day earns five sols and a half. All the houses are surrounded with barbots, with salmons, and with shad-fish; there the beams of the roof are of sturgeons, the roofs are of bacon, and the laths are of sausages." Through the streets, the poet tells us, fat geese go roasting and turning themselves, and after them come choice sauces. In the roads are tables always spread with white table-cloths, and every one may eat and drink as much as he likes. There is a river of wine, and the ladies are always beautiful and always kind, and there are plenty of drapers, who are glad to give you every month new and beautiful robes. But the most wonderful thing there is the fountain

of youth, which will restore to bloom and vigour all who bathe in it, be they ever so old and ugly.

" Encore i a autre merveille,
C'onques n'oïstes sa pareille,
Que la fontaine de Jovent,
Qui fet rajovenir la gent."

People may think the poet a fool for leaving so glorious a place, but the fact was he came to seek his friends and to take them with him, and he could never after find the way back.

This imaginary land of Cocaigne was very famous among the poets of the middle ages in most of our western lands. The most witty and spirited poem on the subject is one in English, apparently written in the latter part of the thirteenth century, which was printed very inaccurately by Hickes, from a manuscript which is now in the British Museum.* Cocaigne is here described as being far out at sea "by West Spain."

* MS. Harl. No. 913. It has been supposed that the manuscript from which Hickes transcribed this poem went with Bishop More's manuscript to the public library of the University of Cambridge: there is, however, no such manuscript there; and, as the contents of the Harl. MS. No. 913 exactly answers to the description of More's manuscript, there can be no doubt of their being the same. It had probably been lent by the bishop before his death, and had not been returned. The English poem of Cocaigne seems to have agreed more with a low Dutch poem, of which a fragment is given by Hoffman in his Horæ Belgicæ, than with the French poem, though the following passage of the latter agrees very closely with one of my extracts from the English poem:

" Par les rues vont rostissant
Les crasses oes et tornant
Tout par eles, et tout adès
Les suit la blanche aillie après."

" Along the streets come roasting fat geese, and turning all by them-

"Thog[1] paradis be miri and brigt,[2]
Cokaygn is of fairir sigt.[3]
What is ther in paradis
Bot[4] grasse and flure[5] and grene ris?[6]
Thog ther be joi and gret dute,[7]
Ther nis met, bote frute.[8]
Ther nis[9] halle, bure, no benche,[10]
Bot watir manis thursto[11] quenche."

In paradise there were but two men, Enoch and Helias; they must, therefore, pass a wretched life when there were no more men than those.*

"Beth[12] ther no men bot two,
Hely and Enok also:
Elinglich[13] mai hi go,
Whar ther wonith men no mo."[14]

On the contrary, in Cocaigne there was to be had choice

---

[1] though
[2] bright
[3] sight
[4] except
[5] flowers
[6] green boughs
[7] pleasure
[8] there is not meat, but fruit
[9] is not
[10] bower nor bench
[11] *for* thirst to
[12] there are
[13] wretchedly; they must lead a wretched life
[14] where there dwell no more men

---

selves, and immediately after follows white garlek." The English poem, and the German and Dutch poems on the same subject, have since been printed in the Alt-Deutsche Blätter, vol. i, pp. 163 and 396.

* It was common to represent paradise with these two characters in it. In the Anglo-Saxon dialogue of Adrian and Ritheus already quoted, we have—"Tell me, who are the two men in paradise who are constantly weeping, and are sad? I tell thee, Enoc and Helias; they weep, because they shall come on this earth and suffer death." I remember, in Fabyan's Chronicle, an account of a piece of tapestry representing paradise, which was known by two persons, 'Enok and Hely,' being painted thereon.

meat and good drink, to which every one was welcome. There was no land like to it under heaven; it was there always day, and never night, and there was no quarrelling or strife, and people did not die, but lived ever happily. That land was never visited by noxious vermin, nor by thunder, hail, rain, snow, or even wind.

"Ther is a wel[1] fair abbei
Of white monkes and of grei.
Ther beth bowris[2] and halles:
Al of pasteiis beth[3] the walles,
Of fleis,[4] of fisse,[5] and rich met,[6]
The likfullist[7] that man mai et;[8]
Fluren cakes beth the schingles alle,[9]
Of cherche, cloister, boure, and halle:
The pinnes beth[10] fat podinges,
Rich met[11] to princes and kinges."

The "cloister" was all built of gems and spices, and all about were birds merrily singing.

"Yite I do yow mo to witte,[12]
The gees i-rostid on the spitte,
Fleeg[13] to that abbay, Good hit wot,[14]
And gredith,[15] 'gees al hote, al hot.'
Hi[16] bringeth garlek gret plenté,
The best i-digt[17] that man mai se.
The leverokes[18] that beth cuth,[19]
Ligtith adun to manis muth,[20]
I-digt in stu ful swithe[21] wel,
Pudrid with gilofre and canel."[22]

---

[1] well fair, *i. e.* very fair (bien belle, *Fr.*)
[2] bowers
[3] are
[4] flesh
[5] fish
[6] meat
[7] pleasantest
[8] eat
[9] the tiles are all cakes of flour
[10] are
[11] meat
[12] yet I cause you to know more
[13] fly
[14] God knows it
[15] cry out
[16] they
[17] dressed
[18] larks
[19] that are taught
[20] alight down to man's mouth
[21] very
[22] cinnamon

The satire on the life of the monks, which is concealed under these descriptions, is heightened by the penance which the visitor must undergo before he reaches this happy land.

" Whose[1] w[i]l com that lond to,
Ful grete penance he mot[2] do:
Seve[3] yere in swineis dritte[4]
He mote wade, wol ye i-witte,[5]
Al anon up to the chynne.
So he schal the lond winne."

It is curious to observe how similar legends and ideas are created at times among different people, totally independent of each other; and it shows us how wary we ought to be in arguing too boldly on accidental analogies. The ancient Greeks had their Cocaigne. Athenæus has preserved some passages from lost poets of the best age of Grecian literature,* where the burlesque on the golden age and earthly paradise of their mythology bears so striking a resemblance to our descriptions of Cocaigne, that we might almost think, did we not know it to be impossible, that in the one case whole lines had been translated from the other. In the poet Cratinus mention was made of the time of old when Kronos was king, and when they played at bowls with wheaten loaves.

— Οἷς δὴ
βασιλεὺς Κρόνος ἦ τὸ παλαίον·
ὅτε τοῖς ἄρτοις ἠστραγάλιζον.

This was the age of idleness: the tables came of them-

[1] whosoever
[2] must
[3] seven
[4] dirt
[5] will you know

* Athenæi Deipnosoph. lib. vi, c. 94, et seq.

selves, and the table-cloth spread itself, as soon as people called for them; the cups came to receive the wine, and the decanters poured it out spontaneously. Then might be heard such converse as—

Ἰχθύ, βάδιζ'.—Ἀλλ' οὐδέπω
τἀπὶ θάτερ' ὀπτός εἰμί.—
Οἶκον μετασκεύψας σεαυ-
τὸν, ἄλειφας ἰσάλειψον.

"Fish, come hither!"—"But I am not yet fried on the other side." "Turn yourself, then, and baste yourself with oil." In a play by Teleclides, the god was introduced saying,

Λέξω τοίνυν, βίον ἐξ ἀρχῆς
ὃν ἐγὼ θνητοῖσι παρεῖχον.
Εἰρήνη μὲν πρῶτον ἁπάντων
ἦν ὥσπερ ὕδωρ κατὰ χειρός.
Ἡ γῆ δ' ἔφερ' οὐ δίος οὐδὲ νόσους,
ἀλλ' αὐτόματ' ἦν τὰ δέοντα.
Οἴνῳ γὰρ ἅπας' ἔῤῥει χάραδρα·
μᾶζαι δ' ἄρτοις ἐμάχοντο
περὶ τοῖς στόμασιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων,
ἱκετεύουσαι καταπίνειν,
εἴ τι φιλοῖεν τὰς λευκοτάτας.

"I will describe, therefore, the primeval life which I gave to mortals. Peace, then, first of all things, was as plentiful as water to the hand. And the earth bore neither fear nor diseases, but all things needful grew spontaneously. For every stream flowed with wine; and barley cakes were fighting with wheaten loaves about men's mouths, praying people to devour them, if they would choose the whitest."

'Οπταὶ δὲ κίχλαι μετ' ἀμητίσκων
εἰς τὸν φάρυγ' εἰσεπίτοντο.

"And roasted larks, with sweetbreads, flew down people's throats." "Men," says he, "in those times, were fat, and mightily large."

Οἱ δ' ἄνθρωποι πίονες ἦσαν
τότε, καὶ μέγα χρῆμα γιγάντων.

Pherecrates, too, in a play called the 'Miners,' gave a glowing description of those times of good living. He talks of goodly beef smoking and steaming as it sailed along the streets, with islands of fat dumplings, and fleets of sausages sticking to the banks like oysters, and salt fish here and there, highly seasoned, swimming along. Then, he says,

'Οπταὶ κίχλαι γὰρ ἀνάβραστοι ἠρτυμέναι
περὶ τὸ στόμ' ἐπέτονθ', ἀντιβολοῦσαι καταπιεῖν,
ὑπὸ μυρρίναισι κἀνεμώναις κεχυμέναι.

"Hot roasted larks, ready dressed, flew about your mouth, beseeching you to devour them, strewed over with myrtle and anemonies."*

Κόραι δ' ἐν ἀμπεχόναις τριχάπτοις, ἁρτίως
ἠβυλλιῶσαι, καὶ τὰ ῥόδα κεκαρμέναι,
πλήρεις κύλικας οἴνου μέλανος ἀνθοσμίου
ἤντλουν διὰ χώνης τοῖσι βουλομένοις πιεῖν.

"And maidens in thin transparent garment, just blooming

* This passage bears a remarkably close resemblance to that of the English Cocaigne quoted above, p. 55.

into ripeness, adorned with roses which they had plucked, poured through a strainer full cups of dark odorous wine to all who wished to drink." When any one ate or drank of the good things which were set before him, there was immediately twice as much more in place of what he had consumed.

CHAPTER III.

Henry of Saltrey, and his legend of the descent of the knight Owain—French metrical versions of Henry's legend — English metrical versions—Ivain the son of Urien—Story of Arthur and Merlin—Abstract of the English poem of "Owayn Miles," from the Cottonian manuscript.

HENRY, a Benedictine monk of the abbey of Saltrey, was born and educated in Huntingdonshire, and according to Bale, "was enslaved by superstition from his early childhood." This writer insinuates that his story of Patrick's Purgatory was a mere invention of his own imagination, helped a little by the four books of the 'Dialogues of St. Gregory,' and certain popular stories concerning mount Etna, though he admits that Henry was reported to be only the dupe to the impostures of an Irish bishop Florentian, and of the Cistercian abbot Gilbert de Luda.* Others have thought that the legend was little more than the 'Necyomantia' of Virgil, or that exhibited at the cave of Trophonius in Greece, newly dressed up. The story of Henry of Saltrey is however perfectly consistent with the popular belief of his time. There can be no doubt that by this story St. Patrick's Purgatory was first

* Gilbert de Luda (abbot of Louth, in Lincolnshire,) is said to have written an account of the descent of Owen, but he was probably only the oral relator of the story.

made known to the world; but it seems very probable that the place had been already occupied by the monks, and that in Ireland it was regarded with superstitious awe. Henry's legend of the descent of Owain in 1153, which became celebrated as the adventures of 'The Knight,' and was by that title appealed to as a chief authority in questions touching the purgatory, was in the original Latin spread probably over every country where the Romish faith prevailed. It was soon translated into the modern languages. There still exist three different early French versions, all metrical: the first, by the celebrated poetess Marie of France, was written in the early part of the thirteenth century; the other two are probably works of the latter end of the same century, or the beginning of the next.* There are also two English metrical versions, both under the titles of 'Owayne Miles.' The first is contained in the Auchinlech manuscript at Edinburgh, and seems to have been written early in the fourteenth century.† It is probably a translation of one of the French poems, and like them is very long. It is written in stanzas of six lines, is imperfect at the beginning, but concludes with this stanza, which will serve as a specimen:

* Marie's poem is published at the end of the second volume of Roquefort's edition of her works. The other French versions will be found in MSS. Cotton. Domit. A. iv, fol. 258, and Harl. No. 273, fol. 191, v°.

† It was printed in 1837, in a small collection of early religious poems edited by two zealous and indefatigable literary antiquaries, and much respected friends, Messieurs Turnbull and David Laing, of Edinburgh: the impression only reached thirty-two copies, in consequence of which the book is very rare.

"And when he deyd he went, y-wis,
Into the heighe joie of paradis,
Thurch help of Godes grace.
Now God, for seynt Owains love,
Graunt ous heven blis above,
Bifor his swete face."

The other English version, in which the story is condensed, is more modern, and is contained in a manuscript of the fifteenth century in the British Museum.*

Owain, the hero of the story, was, as we learn from Henry and from Matthew Paris, one of king Stephen's knights. M. Roquefort, in his edition of the poems of Marie, has started a singular notion, that Owain is no other than Ivain, the son of Urien, one of the knights of king Arthur's round table, who was the subject of a romance by Chrestiens de Troyes, entitled 'Le Chevalier au Lion,' and of which we have an early English version, under the title of 'Iwain and Gawain.' But since M. Roquefort has not even hinted at any authority for such an opinion, it can hardly be taken for anything more than a fanciful idea of his own. A learned countryman of M. Roquefort, in the sixteenth century, Stephanus Forcatulus, published a still more singular tale concerning this purgatory cave. In a very wandering book, 'De Gallorum Imperio et Philosophia,' (Lugd. 1595, p. 1007,) he speaks of the zeal of king Arthur in abolishing the superstitious customs of his subjects, which were more especially prevalent in Ireland where the gospel had been only lately preached by Patrick; and he adds, that the king even condescended to

* There were several editions of this legend, in French and other languages, in the earlier ages of the invention of printing.

pay a visit to the dark cave of the saint, into which, leaving the light behind him, he descended by a rough and steep road. "For they say that this cave is an entrance to the shades, or at least to purgatory, where poor sinners may get their offences washed out, and return again rejoicing to the light of day." Perhaps, says Forcatulus, Patrick contrived the story to terrify the wild Irish from their sins, by representing to them so near home the place of their punishment. "I have learnt from certain serious commentaries of Merlin, that Gawain, his master of horse, called Arthur back, and dissuaded him from examining further the horrid cave in which was heard the sound of falling water which emitted a sulphureous smell, and of voices lamenting as it were for the loss of their bodies." The king then consulted Merlin, who swallowed the heart of a newly-killed mole, and muttered certain barbarous words, whose meaning was not easily to be understood; he thus obtained a spirit of divination, and was enabled to declare that the cave was first dug by Ulysses, who came to Ireland in the course of his wanderings, and that time had gradually hollowed it till it became as large as it was then. "Which of a certainty," Forcatulus adds, "is not far from the truth," (quod profecto non multum a vero abhorret.) It is not unlikely that in some later French romances the stories of Arthur and of Patrick's cave may have been jumbled together; indeed a little research will show several instances of resemblances in the stories of the king and the saint, which renders it not very improbable that the two characters may have been formed upon similar popular legends existing independently in different countries, and both have experienced the same fortune to be wholly unknown to the historian Bede: but the allusion

to the story of Ulysses is enough to raise very strong suspicions that the above tale is intended only for a joke. The joke has been followed up by a much later writer, who, with great ingenuity, has derived the name of the province from that of the hero—*Ulster*, as though a corruption of *Ulyssisterra*, the land of Ulysses. Camerarius, however, seriously thought that Lough Derg was the place alluded to by Claudian, (in Rufin. i, 122.)

"Est locus extremum qua pandit Gallia litus
Oceani prætentus aquis, ubi fertur Ulysses
Sanguine libato populum movisse silentem.
Illic umbrarum tenui stridore volantum
Flebilis auditur quæstus. Simulacra coloni
Pallida defunctasque vident migrare figuras," &c.

The later poem of 'Owayne Miles' which is contained in MS. Cotton. Calig. A. ii, fol. 89, v°, commences thus:

"God, that ys so fulle of myght,
That mendede wronge and made ryght,
He sente men us to wysse[1]
The ryght way to heven blysse:
Fyrste his prophetys that were bold,
Off that was comyng they us told;
But the folke that wer yn londe
Ne myght hem not untherstonde."

The author proceeds to tell us the origin of the purgatory:

"Holy byschoppes som tyme ther were,
That tawgte[2] men of Goddes lore.[3]
In Irlonde preched seynt Patryke,
In that londe was non bym lyke:
He prechede Goddes worde fulle wyde,
And tolde men what sbullde betyde.

[1] to teach (wisian, A.-S.) [2] taught [3] doctrine

Fyrste he preched of heven blysse,
Who ever go thyder may ryght nowgt[1] mysse:
Sethen[2] he preched of helle pyne,[3]
Howe wo them ys[4] that cometh therinne:
And then he preched of purgatory,
As he fonde[5] in his story.
But yet the folke of the contré
Beleved not that hit[6] mygth[7] be;
And seyde, but gyf[8] hit were so
That eny mon myth[9] hymself go,
And se alle that, and come ageyn,
Then wolde they beleve fayn."[10]

Vexed at the obstinacy of his hearers, Patrick prayed to God that he might be enabled to show them a convincing token; and, accordingly, as he was one day alone in the wilderness, Christ appeared to the saint, and gave him "a booke of gospellus and a staf," which staff was afterwards called the staff of Jesus (*baculus Jhesu.*) Both these relics were preserved in Henry's days, and they were carried in procession full holily on every "feste daye," in the year, the archbishop bearing the staff in his hand. After having given the book and the staff to St. Patrick,

"God spakke to saynt Patryke tho[11]
By name, and badde hym with hym go:
He ladde hym ynto a wyldernesse,
Wher was no reste more ne[12] lesse,

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[1] right nothing
[2] afterwards (siððan, A.-S.)
[3] pain, punishment
[4] how woe is to them, *i. e.* what woe they have
[5] found
[6] it, the neuter of the pronoun, which, both in A.-Sax. and middle English, forms its genders thus, *he, heo, hit;* we have kept the masculine, adopted an older form *sho*, worn down to *she*, in the fem., and dropped the *h* of the neuter
[7] might
[8] if
[9] any man might
[10] gladly
[11] then
[12] nor

And shewed that he mygth se
Into the erthe a pryvé entré:[1]
Hit was yn a depe dyches ende.
'What mon,' he sayde, 'that wylle hereyn wende,
And dwelle theryn a day and a nygth,
And holde his byleve and rygth,[2]
And come ageyn that he ne dwelle,[3]
Mony a mervayle he may of telle.[4]
And alle tho[5] that doth thys pylgrymage,
I shalle hem graunt for her[6] wage,
Whether he be sqwyer or knave,[7]
Other purgatorye shalle he non have.'
Als sone as he hade sayde hym[8] so,
Jhesu wente the byssboppe fro.
Seynt Patryke then anon ryght
He ne stynte[9] ner day ne nyght,
But gatte hym help fro day to day,
And made there a fayr abbey,
And chanones gode he dede therinne
Unther the abbyt[10] of seynte Austynne.
Seynt Patryke lette make ryght welle
A dore bowden[11] with iren and stele,
Lokke and key he made therto
That no mon shulde the dore undo."

This key was given in keeping to the prior of the abbey. Even in the days of Patrick, the legend tells us, many entered this "ditch," of whom some perished there, while others returned unhurt, and told of wonderful torments which they had suffered, and of equally wonderful visions of happiness which they had afterwards seen; and their relations were, by Patrick's own order, taken down in

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[1] a secret entrance
[2] belief and right
[3] stay
[4] he may tell of many a wonder
[5] those
[6] their
[7] boy
[8] said to him
[9] he stopped not
[10] under the habit
[11] a door bound

writing, and preserved in the church. Inasmuch as people were there purged of their sins, the place began to be called 'Patrick's Purgatory,' and the place of the church was named Reglis, or Riglis.

The ceremonies which Patrick had ordered to be observed by the penitents, previous to their entrance into this purgatory, were, it seems, for a long time strictly adhered to. The visitor must first go to the bishop of the diocese, declare to him that he came of his own free will, and request of him permission to make the pilgrimage. The bishop warned him against venturing any further in his design, and represented to him the perils of his undertaking; but if the pilgrim still remained steadfast in his purpose, he gave him a recommendatory letter to the prior of the island. The prior again tried to dissuade him from his design by the same arguments that had been previously urged by the bishop. If, however, the pilgrim still remained steadfast, he was taken into the church to spend there fifteen days in fasting and praying. After this the mass was celebrated, the holy communion administered to him, and holy water sprinkled over him, and he was led in procession with reading of litanies to the entrance of the purgatory, where a third attempt was made to dissuade him from entering. If he still persisted, the prior allowed him to enter the cave, after he had received the benediction of the priests, and, in entering, he commended himself to their prayers, and made the sign of the cross on his forehead with his own hand. The prior then made fast the door, and opened it not again till the next morning, when, if the penitent were there, he was taken out and led with great joy to the church, and, after fifteen days' watching and praying, was dismissed. If he was not found when the door was

opened, it was understood that he had perished in his pilgrimage through purgatory; the door was closed again, and he was never afterwards mentioned.*

The knight Owain, who was by birth an Irishman, had long served in the wars under king Stephen, and had obtained permission to return to his native country. He was there seized with sudden penitence for his sins, for he had lived a life of violence and rapine, and, besides other enormities, he had even violated churches and made free with consecrated things. He obtained leave of the bishop and the prior to visit, by way of penance, St. Patrick's Purgatory, with the hope of washing out the guilt of these misdemeanours, and accordingly passed through all the preliminary ceremonies.

(fol. 90, v°) "Fyftene dayes he dwelled thore[1]
In almesse dedes[2] and holy lore:[3]
At the fyftene dayes ende
The knygth began forth to wende.[4]
Fyrst a-morow[5] he herde masse,
And afterwarde he asoyled[6] was
With holy water and holy book:
And rychc relykes forth they toke.
Every prest and every man
Wente with hym yn processyoun,
And, as lowde as they mygth[7] crye,
For hym they songe the letanye,
And browte[8] hym fayre ynto the entré,
Ther[9] as syr Owen wolde be."

[1] there
[2] almsdeeds
[3] doctrine
[4] to go
[5] in the morning
[6] assoiled, absolved
[7] might
[8] brought
[9] where

* There is a remarkable resemblance between these ceremonies and those observed by the ancient Greeks at the cave of Trophonius.

Then Sir Owain was locked in the cave, and, after a short time, he went forth. At first he had a very little light, but this by degrees disappeared, and he was obliged to grope his way in utter darkness, till a sort of twilight again appeared.

"Then wente he faste, when he mygth se,
Tylle he come to a grete countré:
Hit semed welle the more wylderneese,
For ther grewe nother tre ner grasse.[1]
As he beheide on his rygth honde,
A swyde[2] fayr halle he syge[3] ther stonde:
Hit was bothe longe and wyde,
And hit was open on every syde
As a cloyster yn alle wyse:
Hit was made yn selkowth[4] wyse."

In this hall he met with fifteen men in white garments, with their heads shaven after the manner of ecclesiastics, and one of them told Owain all that he would have to suffer in his pilgrimage, how he would be attacked by unclean spirits, and by what means he should defend himself.

(fol. 91) "Yf they wolle the bete or bynde,
Loke thu have thys worde yn mynde:
'Jhesu, as thu arte fulle of mygth,
Have mercy on me synfull knygth!'
And evermore have yn thy thowght
Jhesu that the so dere hath bowght."

They then left him, and—

"As he sat ther alone by hymself,
He berde grete dynn on eche half,[5]

---

[1] neither tree nor grass
[2] very
[3] saw
[4] strange
[5] part, side

As alle the layte[1] and alle the thonder
That ever was herde heven under,
And as alle the trees and alle the stones
Shulde smyte togedyr rygth at oones,[2]
For alle the worlde so hyt ferde:[3]
And therto a lowde crye he herde.
Ne hadde he be[4] welle y-tawgte[5] byfore
He hadde bene loste for ever more:
For fle mygte he nawgte,[6] but moste[7] abyde.
Then come ther develes on every syde,
Wykked gostes, I wote,[8] fro helle,
So mony that no tonge mygte telle:
They fylled the hows yn two rowes;
Some grenned[9] on hym and some made mowes."[10]

These 'fendes' welcomed the knight, and pretended to rejoice that he had not, like other men, waited on earth till the end of his life, but had come prematurely to suffer the punishments which his sins deserved. "However," said they, "as thou hast always been to us a good and zealous servant, we will even now allow thee to go back unhurt into the world, that thou mayest spend the remainder of thy life in its pleasures."

"Then sayde the knygth, 'I dowte you nowgth,[11]
I betake[12] me to hym that me hatht wroght.'
Then the fendes made a fyre anone
Of blakke pyche[13] and of brenstone;[14]
They caste the knygth theryn for to brenne,[15]
And alle they begonne[16] on hym to grenne.[17]

---

[1] lightning
[2] right at once
[3] so it fared
[4] had he not been
[5] taught
[6] for he might not flee
[7] must
[8] know
[9] grinned
[10] mocked him
[11] I nothing fear you
[12] give
[13] black pitch
[14] brimstone
[15] to burn
[16] began
[17] grin

The knygth that payne fulle sore he thowgth,
To Jhesu he called whyle he mowgth:
'Jhesu,' he sayde, 'fulle of pyté,
Help and have mercy on me.'
Alle that fyre was qweynte[1] anone,
The fendes flowen away everychone:[2]
And then the knygth anone up stode,
As hym hadde ayled nowgt but gode."

After these were gone, another party came up:

"There come develes other mony mo,[3]
And badde the knygth with hem to go,
And ladde hym into a fowle contreye,[4]
Where ever was nygth and never day,
For hit was derke and wonther colde:[4]
Yette was there never man so bolde,
Hadde he never so mony clothes on,
But he wolde be colde as ony stone.
Wynde herde he none blowle,[5]
But faste hit frese[6] bothe hye[7] and lowe.
They browgte hym to a felde[8] fulle brode,
Overe suche another never he yode,[9]
For of the lenghte none ende he knewe;
Thereover algate[10] he moste nowe.
As he wente he herde a crye,
He wondered what hit was, and why,

---

[1] quenched
[2] every one (ever each one)
[3] more
[4] wonder (*i. e.* wondrous) cold
[5] blow
[6] it froze
[7] high
[8] field
[9] went
[10] at all events

---

[4] Traxerunt autem illum versus fines illos, ubi sol oritur in media æstate; cumque venissent tanquam in finem mundi, cœperunt dextrorsum converti, et per vallem latissimam tendere, versus illam partem, qua sol oritur media hyeme. (H. Salt.)

He syg[1] ther men and wymmen also
That lowde cryed, for hem was woo.[2]
They leyen[3] thykke on every londe,
Faste nayled bothe fote and honde
With nayles glowyng alle of brasse:
They ete the erthe so wo hem was;[4]
Here[5] face was nayled to the grownde.
'Spare,' they cryde, 'a lytylle stounde.'[6]
(fol. 91,v°) The develes wolde hem not spare:
To hem peyne they thowgte yare."[7]

This was the first *field* of punishment. In the original Latin legend, the knight was led successively through four such fields. In the second and third the souls suffered much the same kind of torments as in the first, with this only difference in the second, that they were fixed to the ground with their backs downward, and were persecuted by multitudes of fiery serpents and toads. In the fourth field, the souls were hung up in fires by the various members which had been most sinful, and some were roasted on spits, and basted with molten metals. In the next place, they were turned about on a great wheel of fire.

"Some of the fendes turned ageyne,
And forth they ladde syr Owayne
Fulle ferre[8] into another felde,
In such on[9] bare he never shelde.
Hit was lenger and welle more[10]
Then that felde was byfore.
And, as he loked hym besyde,
He syg[11] ther pyttus mony and wyde;

---

[1] saw
[2] for woe was to them (they had woe)
[3] lay
[4] they had so much [woe
[5] their
[6] a little time
[7] readily, quickly
[8] far
[9] one
[10] greater
[11] saw

Thykke they were as they mygth bene,[1]
Onethe[2] was ther a fote hem betwene;
And alle maner of metalle
He syg ther yn the pyttus walle.[3]
Men and wymmen ther were also
In tho[4] pyttus abydyng wo.[5]
Some were therinne up to the chynne,
And yet hadde they nogt bete here synne;[6]
And some were yn to shappus;[7]
And some were up to the pappus;
And some were yn to the kne;
They wolde fulle fayne out have be."[8]

Owain was pushed by the devils into one of these pits, and dreadfully scalded, but he called upon his Saviour, and escaped. He was afterwards brought to a place where souls were punished in a lake of extreme coldness, and then the demons dragged him to the 'Devil's Mouth.'*

" But as he stode up, and loked abowte,
Of develes he syge[9] a fulle gret rowte.
'Knygte,' they sayde, 'why standes thou here?
And where ar alle thy false feere?[10]
They tolde the that thys was helle;
But other wyse we shulle the telle.
Come with us a lytylle sowth;
We shalle the lede to the develes mowth.'

[1] might be
[2] hardly
[3] boil (weallan, A.-S.)
[4] those
[5] enduring woe
[6] made amends for their sinnes (betian, A.-S.)
[7] up to the loins, shappe, pudenda, verenda (sceape, gesceapu A.-S.)
[8] full gladly have been out
[9] saw
[10] companions, fellows

* Henry makes the mouth of hell a fiery pit, where the souls are tossed up and down, and after that come the water and bridge, making in all ten places of punishment.

They drewe hym be the hatere,[1]
Tylle they come to a gret wattere,
Broode and blakke as any pyke;[2]
Sowles were theryn mony and thykke;
And also develes on eche a syde
As thykke as flowres yn someres tyde.
The water stonke fowle therto
And dede the soles mykylle woo:[3]
Up they come to ese hem a stownde,[4]
The develes drew hem ageyn to the grownde.
Over the water a brygge[5] there was,
Forsothe kenere then ony glasse:
Hyt was narowe and hit was hyge,[6]
Onethe[7] that other ende he syge.
(fol. 92) The myddylle was hyge, the ende was lowe,
Hit ferde as hit hadde ben a bent bowe.[8]
The develle sayde, 'knygte, here may thu se
Into helle the rygte entré:
Over thys brygge thu meste wende,[9]
Wynde and rayne we shulle[10] the sende:
We shulle the sende wynde fulle goode,
That shalle the caste ynto the floode."

Owain, however, prayed earnestly to God for help, and, when he attempted to pass, the bridge appeared to him wide and safe, but when he reached the middle, all the "fendes" raised so terrific a yell that the knight was near falling over the bridge with fear. He however arrived in safety at the other shore, where the power of the devils ended, and he went on until he came to a fair wall, "whyte and brygth as glasse," which reached up into the air to an unbounded extent. In face of him was a beautiful gate, made of

---

[1] garments, attire
[2] pitch
[3] caused the souls much woe
[4] ease them a while
[5] bridge
[6] high
[7] scarcely
[8] it fared as it had been a bent bow
[9] must go
[10] shall

precious metals and gems, from which issued a ravishing perfume. Owain soon forgot all his pains and sorrows.

" As he stode, and was so fayne,[1]
Hym thowgth[2] ther come hym agayne[3]
A swyde[4] fayr processyoun
Of alle manere menne of relygyoun,
Fayre vestymentes they hadde on,
So ryche syg he never none.
Myche joye hym thowgte to se
Bysshopes yn here dygnité;
Ilkone[5] wente other be and be,[6]
Every man yn his degré.
He syg ther monkes and chanones,
And freres[7] with newe shavene crownes;
Ermytes[8] he sawe there amonge,
And nonnes with fulle mery songe;
Persones,[9] prestes, and vycaryes;
They made fulle mery melodyes.
He syg ther kynges and emperoures,
And dukes that hadde casteles and toures,
Erles and barones fele,[10]
That some tyme hadde the worldes wele.[11]
Other folke he syg also,
Never so mony as he dede thoo.[12]
Wymmen he syg ther that tyde;[13]
Myche was the joye ther on every syde:
(fol. 92, v°) For alle was joye that with hem ferde,[14]
And myche solempnyté he herde."

The procession approached Owain, and welcomed him thither; and they led him about, showing him the beauties of that country.

---

[1] glad
[2] it seemed to him
[3] towards him
[4] very
[5] each one
[6] one by another, *i. e.* in couples
[7] friars
[8] hermits
[9] parsons
[10] many
[11] weal, prosperity
[12] then
[13] time
[14] fared, went

"Hyt was grene, and fulle of flowres
Of mony dyvers colowres;
Hyt was grene on every syde,
As medewus are yn someres tyde.
Ther were trees growyng fulle grene,
Fulle of fruyte ever more, y wene;[1]
For ther was frwyte of mony a kynde,
Suche yn the londe may no mon fynde.
Ther they have the tree of lyfe,
Theryn ys myrthe, and never stryfe;
Frwyte of wysdom also ther ys,
Of the whyche Adam and Eve dede amysse:
Other manere frwytes ther were fele,[2]
And alle manere joye and wele.[3]
Moche folke he syg there dwelle,
There was no tongue that mygth hem telle;[4]
Alle were they cloded[5] yn ryche wede,
What cloth hit was he kowthe not rede.[6]
* * *
There was no wronge, but ever rygth,
Ever day and nevere nygth.
They shone as brygth and more clere
Then ony sonne[7] yn the day doth here."

The bishop told Owain that he had passed through purgatory, and that he would never go there again; they, he said, had done the same before. All men who had not "shryved" themselves before their dying day, went to purgatory, and there abode till they had done sufficient penance for their sins;

"But[8] some frende for here mysdede
For hem do[9] other synge or rede;
For thus may man thorow suche dyvyne,
The soner come out of his pyne."

---

[1] suppose
[2] many
[3] weal
[4] count
[5] clothed
[6] tell, explain
[7] than any sun
[8] unless
[9] cause (some one) either to sing or read

The place he had now arrived at was the earthly paradise, where dwelt Adam and Eve before they forfeited their dwelling-place by eating an apple. Adam dwelt on earth, as the bishops told the knight, nine hundred and fifteen years, and he was "yn helle with Lucyfere" four thousand six hundred and four years, when Christ brought out of hell Adam and all his children that were worthy of grace, and took them with him to heaven. The bishops and all the other people whom Owain saw in the earthly paradise lived there in bliss and joy, but they expected much greater joy when they should be called to Christ.

"And every day we wexen moo;[1]
But angeles called some us froo.[2]
Alle gyf[3] we be out of penance yile,
Here we abyde Goddes wille,
For yet have we not that dygnyté
To come before his mageste.
(fol. 93) But oon and on,[4] as he wylle calle,
At the laste we shalle come alle.
Every day cometh oure fede
Of hym that for us shedde his blede;
And that thu shalte fele er thu go.[5]
Ther come a gleme anone fulle brygth.
And spradde over that lond rygth:
Hyt was swote[6] and hyt was hote,
Into every monnes mowthe hit smote.
The knygte felde that yn glyde,[6]
He ne wyste[7] where he was that tyde,
Ne whether that he was qwykke or dede,
Such hym thowgte that ryche brede."

---

[1] grow more, increase in number
[2] from us
[3] if
[4] one and one, *i. e.* one at a time
[5] sweet
[6] felt that glide in
[7] he knew not

After having thus tasted of the food of those in paradise, Owain was very desirous of remaining there, but the bishop told him that it was necessary for him to return to earth and finish his allotted time there, and leave his flesh and bones behind him. He was therefore obliged to return, but he found his way back to the entrance of the cave by a shorter and pleasanter way than that by which he went, and he saw again the fifteen men, who told him all the things that should happen to him in his after-life. When the prior and "chanones" came to the door in the morning, they found the knight waiting to be taken out, and they congratulated him on his prosperous journey, and he stayed with them fifteen days, and told them his story. He afterwards went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and ended his life in piety. "*Explycit Owayne.*"

CHAPTER IV.

Situation of purgatory, &c.—Saints' legends and fairy tales—Story of St. Columba and the milkman—Fairy-land—Romance of Orfeo and Herodys—Story of the green children—Song of the visit of the youth to purgatory and paradise—Ballad of Thomas and the elf-queen—Purgatory in the air—Story of the Norwegian archbishop and his clerical elf—Voyage of St. Brandan—Legendary navigators—Situation of paradise—Journey of the three monks to paradise—The soul in the ice—Purgatory within the earth—Cosmographical notions—Entrance to purgatory.

The vision of Owain, in the character of its details, differs not from our other legends of purgatory: still it has a most distinguishing characteristic. The other were visits in the spirit—Owain went in the body; the other visitors had no distinct notions of the road by which they went, whilst the knight chose a road to which the entrance was accurately defined. It is in the place, and not in the circumstances of the vision that there is a peculiarity, and it will not surely be uninteresting to trace, as far as we can, the popular ideas of the situation of purgatory to their origin, and to seek how the road thither became fixed to a particular spot.

A very slight comparison of the saints' legends of the west with that class of popular stories which are called fairy legends, would convince us that there is an intimate connexion between them. I may almost venture to say that in five cases out of six, if we take one of the legends

of the English or Irish saints wherein devils are introduced, and change the devils to elves, we shall have a local popular legend. In both classes of tales we have hobgoblins and incubi, dragon stories and treasure legends. We know, for instance, what mischievous tricks the elves of England formerly, and the northern trolls more lately, have played on country milk-maids, how oft they have sucked up their milk, or spilt it by shaking or overthrowing the pail. A young Irish rustic, called Columbanus, went out one day (in the remote ages of the Irish saints) to milk his master's cows, and, while he was doing this, an elf or an hobgoblin had concealed itself in the pail. The lad was returning with his pail of fresh milk, and its lid carefully fastened down, when he came to the hut in which St. Columba (Kolumkil) was then dwelling. The milkman stopped at the door, and asked the saint to bless the produce of his master's cows. No sooner, however, had the saint made the sign of the cross with his hand, than the lid was violently burst off its hinges and thrown to the ground, and great part of the milk spilt by the concussion. The hobgoblin, it appears, terrified at the conduct of the saint, had rushed out of the pail, and driven off the lid, which was fastened, as he went. Columba blamed the rustic for his negligence in not making the sign of the cross on his pail before he put in the milk, to drive away all such evil and mischievous beings, but he condescended miraculously to fill again the pail with milk.* This is given as a saint's legend. But the popular mythology was not overthrown or made obsolete by the introduction of the Christian faith;

* Vita Sancti Columbæ (in Messingham), cap. 9.

even the saints believed in it, though they looked upon it with an evil eye, and considered all the personages of their old creed as demons. And the country, underground or overground, which from their childhood they had been taught to believe these beings inhabited, became in their minds afterwards intimately connected with hell and purgatory, the places in which the souls of the wicked were put entirely into the power of these tormenting and mischievous demons: and in the same way, among the people, their happy fairy-country became the type of their paradise.

The situation of the fairies' country was differently represented. Sir Thopas, in Chaucer, (Cant. T. lin. 13726:)

"Into his sadel he clombe anon,
And priked over stile and ston
An elf-quene for to espie,
Til he so long had ridden and gone,
That he fond in a privée wone[1]
The contré of faerie."

Fairy-land was, however, more generally described as situated under the surface of our earth. The metrical romance of 'Orfeo and Herodys,'* is a curious specimen of Grecian stories ingrafted on popular mythology, just as we have seen happened in the purgatory legends; and in both cases the person who made the transformation seems to have known the original of his story very imperfectly, and to have misunderstood it. It is remarkable also as the converse of the common rule: while the popular fairy-

[1] secret dwelling.

* This poem is printed in Ritson's Collection of Metrical Romances.

land was generally turned into hell, here the Grecian hell is turned into fairy-land. Orfeo was king of Winchester, and loved much his wife Herodys, who was, from the circumstance of having slept under an 'ymp-tree,' (a tree which had grown up as a sucker from the root of another tree, and usurped its place,) in her garden, obliged to go away with the king of faëry to elf-land. Orfeo, who was a skilful player on the harp, left his kingdom, and went to live in the wild woods, where he on a time saw the fairies hunting, and among the ladies his own wife. He took his harp and followed them.

"In at [the] roche[1] the levedis[2] rideth,
And he after, and nought abideth:
When he was in the roche y-go[3]
Wele thre mile other mo,[4]
He com into a fair cuntray,
As bright [as] soonne [in] someres day,
Smothe[5] and plain, and al grene,
Hill no dale nas[6] none y-sene.
A middle[7] the lond a castel he seighe,[8]
Rich, and reale,[9] and wonder heighe."*

This castle was the residence of the king of faëry, to whom king Orfeo was introduced as a wandering minstrel. His skill delighted the elfine monarch, who promised him, as a reward, anything he could ask. Orfeo, as might be supposed, demanded his queen, and took her home to

[1] rock
[2] ladies (hlæfdig, A.S.)
[3] gone into the rock
[4] or more
[5] smooth
[6] ne was; hill nor dale was none seen
[7] amid
[8] saw
[9] royal

* This passage bears a remarkable resemblance to some parts of the Anglo-Saxon description of paradise, which I have given at page 25.

Winchester, where they reigned together in happiness for many years.

In the story of Elidurus, in Giraldus, a child is taken to this land through a Welsh cavern; and Gervase tells a story of a swineherd belonging to William Peverel, of the Peak castle, in Derbyshire, who, having lost a sow, and descending the Peak cavern in search of it, came to a fine country, where men were reaping in the fields, although the earth above was at the same time covered with snow.* It seems to be the same country as that which was named the Land of St. Martin. In the twelfth century, we are told, two green children were found in a hollow at Wulpittes, in Suffolk. One of them soon died, but the other lived long on the earth, and, when questioned concerning the country from whence they came, said that the people there were all green, that they were Christians,† and had churches, and held in especial veneration St. Martin. She, for it was a girl who survived, said, that in her country there was no sun, but a constant light resembling our twilight, but that there might be seen from their country, separated from it by a very wide river, a country much lighter and brighter than theirs. She knew not where their country was, but remembered that as they were tending their flocks they came to a cave, which they entered, and immediately heard a sound like what she had since found to be the ringing of the church bells. They were pleased with the sound, and proceeded

* Compare the legend of king Herla, in Walter Mapes de Nugis Curialium, Distinc. i, c. 11.

† The elves of the popular stories in England, and Germany, and in the north, generally represent themselves as Christians, and hope to be saved.

along the cavern till they came to its other entrance, when they were overcome by the excess of light and the unusual temperature of the air, and dropt down in a state of insensibility, from which they were roused by the rustics who found them, and then the entrance to the cave was no longer visible.*

Purgatory and hell, too, are in the visions sometimes supposed to be on the surface of the earth, and the visitor walks onwards till he finds them in some remote valley. The more general notion, however, seems to have been, that they were under the earth's surface, and some of the scholastic writers have described exactly their position and extent.† The entrance to these regions, as well as to Paradise, was just the same as that which led to fairy-

* This story is given in William of Newbury, Hist. lib. i, c. 27, and Ralph of Coggeshall, Chron. sub temp. Hen. II. William tells the passage of the green children from their own country to ours differently; he says they fell down in astonishment when they first heard the sound of the bells, and, on recovering from the effects of the surprise, found themselves in the ditch where they were discovered.

† In a long theological poem of the beginning of the fifteenth or end of the fourteenth century (Hampole's 'Prick of Conscience') preserved in manuscript at Cambridge, we are told, (Pub. Lib. Ee. 4, 35,)

"The stede that purgatorie is y-holde
Under eorthe hit is, as clerkus me tolde,
Above the stede, as somme clerkus telleth,
Where uncristene (*un-christened*) children dwelleth."

Next under this latter is hell, and these three, with limbus, are all within the earth.

"Alle thes places me mai helle calle,
For hei beth y-closed withinne the eorth alle."

In this poem, one reason why the soul suffers so much in purgatory is this:

land. In an old song in a manuscript of the beginning of the fifteenth century, we are told the story of a youth who desired to see in what state were his father and uncle, who had fallen together in battle. The father had deserted his own proper wife, for the love of other women.

"The childe that was so nobull and wyse,
Stode at his fadurs grafe[1] at eve:
Ther cam on in a qwyte surplisse,[2]
And prively toke him be the sleve.

'Come on, childe, and go with me,
God has herd thi prayere:
Child, thi fader thu shall se
Wher he brennys[3] in helle fyre.'

He led hym till a cumly[4] hille,
The erth opynd,[5] [and] in thei yede:[6]
Smoke and fyre ther can out welle,[7]
And mony gosts gloyng on glede.[8]

Ther he saw many a sore torment,
How sowlis were put in gret paynyng;
He saw his fader how he brent,[9]
And be the memburs how he hyng."

[1] grave
[2] one in a white surplice
[3] burns
[4] comely
[5] opened
[6] went
[7] boil
[8] glowing on hot coals
[9] burnt

—"The soule is more tendre and nesche
Than the bodi that hath bones and fleysche;
Thanne the soule that is so tendere of kinde
Motę nedis hure penaunce hardere y-finde,
Than eni bodi that evere on live was."

The first of these passages is founded upon Virgil, Æn. VI, line 426:

"Continuo auditæ voces, vagitus et ingens,
Infantumque animæ flentes in limine primo:
Quos dulcis vitæ exsortes, et ab ubere raptos,
Abstulit atra dies et funere mersit acerbo."

After having conversed with his father, and having learnt the dreadful punishment of those who are guilty of "spouse-breke," he was taken to Paradise.

"The angel began the childe to lede
Sone[1] out of that wreched won,[2]
Into a forest was fayre [and] brede;[3]
The son was up, and brigt hit shone.

He led him to a fayre erber,[4]
The gatis were of clen cristall,
To his sigt[5] wer passyng fayre,
And brigt as any beriall.[6]

The wallis semyd of gold brigt,
With durris[7] and with toures strong.
They herd upon the gatis on heght[8]
Mynstralsy and the angel[s] song.

The pellican and the popynjay,[9]
The tomor[10] and the turtil tr[e]w:
A hundirth thousand upon hy;[11]
The nygttyngale with notis new."

He saw near at hand the tree "on which grew the appull that Adam bote;" and from the place whence the fruit was plucked blood issued, whenever any one approached who was not purified of his sins. From hence they went to his uncle's abiding place:

"He led hym forth upon [a] pleyne,[12]
He was war of a [pynakyll] pigt.[13]
Sechan[14] had he never seyne,
Off clothes of gold burnyshed brigt.

---

[1] soon
[2] dwelling
[3] broad (in the copy in MS. Ff. this is read 'fayre in brede' *fair in breadth*)
[4] harbour
[5] sight
[6] beril
[7] doors
[8] height
[9] parrot
[10] (?)
[11] high
[12] plain
[13] he was aware of a pavilion pitched
[14] such a one

" Ther under sate a creature
As brigt as any son beme,
And angels did hym gret honoure.
'Lo! childe,' he said, 'this is thyn eme.[1]'" *

The connexion between the purgatory and paradise of the monks and the fairy-lands of the people is perhaps nowhere so fully exhibited as in the ballad of 'Thomas and the Elf-Queen,' of which the best copy is in the same manuscript with the foregoing song. Thomas meets with the elf-queen on St. Andrew's day, by Huntley banks, and becomes enamoured of her. By the gratification of his passion he incurs the penalty of being obliged to desert "middle earth," and dwell one year with her in elf-land. They enter the earth at the eldryn or fairy hill.

" She led him to the eldryn hille,
Undernethe the grene wode lee,
Wher hit was derk as any helle,
And ever water tille[2] the knee.

Ther the space of dayes thre
He herd but the noyse of the flode:
At the last he seid, 'Wo is me!
Almost I dye for fowte[3] of fode.'

She led hym into a fayre herbere,
Ther frute groande[4] was gret plenté:
Peyres and appuls bothe ripe thei were,
The darte, and also the damsyn tre.

---

[1] uncle [2] to [3] fault, want [4] growing

---

* MS. Bibl. Pub. Cant. Ff. 5, 48, fol. 14. There is another copy of this song in the same collection, Ee. 4, 35, a manuscript of the reign of Hen. VI, differing much in orthography from the former: the bracketed words and letters are from this manuscript.

The fygge, and also the white bery:
The nyghtyngale biggyng[1] hir nest;
The papynjay fast about can[2] flye;
The throstill song wolde have no rest.

He presed[3] to pul the frute with his honde,
As man for fode wex ny[4] honde feynte.
She seid, 'Thomas, let that stond,
Or ellis the feende wille the ateynte.[5]

If thu pulle, the sothe to sey,[6]
Thi soule goeth to the fyre of helle;
Hit comis never out til domesday,
But ther ever in payne to dwelle.'"

She next desires Thomas to lay his hand on her knee, and in this posture explains to him the different objects which present themselves to his view:

"Sees thu yonder is fayr way,
That lyes over yonder mounteyne?
Yonder is the way to heven for ay,[7]
When synful soulis have duryd ther peyne.[8]

Sees thu now, Thomas, yonder way,
That lyse low under yon rise?
Wide is the way, the sothe to say,
Into the joyes of paradyse.

Sees thu yonder thrid[9] way,
That lyes over yonder playne?
Yonder is the way, the sothe to sey,
Ther sinfulle soules shalle drye[10] ther payne.

Sees thu now yonder fourt way,
That lyes over yonder felle?[11]
Yonder is the way, the sothe to say,
Unto the brennand[12] fyre of helle.

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[1] building
[2] began to fly
[3] hastened
[4] nigh
[5] reach, get possession of
[6] to say the truth
[7] for ever [punishment
[8] have suffered their
[9] third
[10] suffer
[11] rock, mountain
[12] burning

Sees thu now yonder fayre castelle,
That standis upon yonder fayre hille?
Off towne and toure it berith the belle;
In mydul erth is ther non like ther-tille."[1]

The castle was in fairy-land, and was her own residence with the king of faëry. This ballad is a very curious production, and there are circumstances about it which would lead us almost to suspect that it is an imitation of the descent of Eneas to the shades. The resemblance, however, may be purely accidental.

The situation of purgatory was not restricted to one place. Gervase tells us a story of a maiden to whom the soul of her lover appeared after death, who told her that he was in purgatory, but that he had permission sometimes to visit her. He said, among many other things, that there was a purgatory-place *in the air*; and also, at a greater distance from the earth, a place where the souls of the good waited the day of doom. This, too, was a notion founded upon popular belief; for one class of the elves of the peasantry had their dwelling-place in the air.* When people began to philosophise upon the beings of the po-

[1] like to it

* In the metrical history by Robert of Gloucester, the "clerkes" tell king Vortiger,

"That ther beth in the eir an hey, fer fro the gronde,
As a maner goestes."

Which "ghosts," he says, "men cleputh *elvene*." The references for the stories alluded to are, Gervas. Tileb. Ot. Imp. iii, 103, (De mortuo qui apparet virgini; mira dicit et annuntiat,) and Girald. Itin. Camb. i, 12.

pular mythology, they created many hypotheses to account for their origin; one of which was, that they were a part of the rebellious angels who were expelled from heaven with Lucifer. In the Anglo-Saxon dialogue of 'Saturn and Solomon,' the answer to the question, "Whither went these angels?" is, "They were divided into three parts: one part God placed in the vortex of the air, another part in the vortex of the water, and a third part in the abyss of hell.* The monks taught that these spirits were much more terrible before the coming of Christ, at which time they were reduced to a state of comparative harmlessness, and were compelled to retire into wildernesses and into the water and air. A curious story illustrative of this circumstance is told by Giraldus. There was in Denmark an archbishop, and he had a 'clerk,' a stranger, who by his diligence and discreet behaviour, but more particularly by his great knowledge of literature and history, soon became a favorite. One day, while he was relating to the archbishop many ancient and before unknown histories, mention happened to be made of the time of the incarnation of Christ, when he said, "Before Christ came on earth the demons had great power over men, but at his advent that power was very much diminished, so that they all fled from before his face and disappeared. For some threw themselves into the sea: others concealed themselves in

* The frequent occurrence of these triads, in collections of dogmas which seem to have been intended to be committed to memory, is very remarkable. In this same dialogue of Saturn and Solomon, we have already had the sun shining on *three* places, after it has set to the world, and the following is another instance: "Tell me where resteth man's soul when the body sleepeth?—I tell thee, it is in *three* places: in the brain, or in the heart, or in the blood."

the hollows of trees and in the clefts of rocks, and I myself jumped into a certain fountain." As soon as he had said this he blushed as if he were ashamed, and left the company. The archbishop and his people were very much astonished, and almost immediately sent to seek after him, but he was nowhere to be found. Not long after this, two of the archbishop's clergy returned from Rome: when they heard what had happened during their absence, they inquired the day and hour of his disappearance, and declared that on exactly the same day and hour they met him on the Alps, and that he told them he was going to Rome, about the business of his master the archbishop. Whence it appeared clearly that he was a hobgoblin in clerical disguise.

Saint Brandan, in his wonderful voyage,* found hell in the north. Thus saith the 'Golden Legend,' as it was 'ymprinted' in London by Wynkyn de Worde: "Seven dayes they sayled alwaye in that clere water. And thenne there came a southe wynde and drof the shyppe northward, where as they sawe an ylonde full derke and full of stynche and smoke, and there they herde grete blowynge and blasting of belowes, but they myght see noo thynge, but herde grete thunderynge, wherof they were sore aferde, and blessyd theym ofte. And sone after there came one stertinge out all brennyng in fyre, and staryd full gastly on theym with grete staryng eyen, of whom the monkes were aghaste. And at hys departyng from theym he made the horryblest crye that myght be herde; and soone ther came a greate nombre of fendes and assayled theim wyth

* The original Latin legend of St. Brandan, with two early French versions, was published by M. Achille Jubinal, 'La Legende Latine de S. Brandaines,' &c. 8vo, Paris, 1836.

hokes and brennyng yron mallys, whyche rannen on the water folowyng theyr shyppe faste in suche wyse that it semed all the see to be on a fyre, but by the plesure of our Lorde they hadde no power to hurte ne greve them ne theyr shyppe; wherfore the fendes began to rore and crye, and threwe theyr hokes and mallys at theym. And they thenne were sore aferd, and prayed to God for comforte and helpe, for they sawe the fendes all aboute the shyppe, and theym semed thenne alle the ylonde and the see to be on a fyre. And wyth a sorowfull crye all the fendes departed fro theym, and retourned to the place that they came fro. And thenne saynt Brandon tolde to theim that thys was a parte of helle, and therfore he charged them to be stedfaste in the fayth, for they sholde yet see many a dredefull place or they came home agayne. And thenne came the south wynde and droof them ferther into the northe, where they sawe an hyll all of fyre, and a foule smoke and stynche coming fro thens. And the fyre stode on eche syde of the hylle, like a walle all brennyng."

Iceland may have furnished the groundwork of this story, but it cannot fail also to call to our minds the adventures of the Danish king, Gorm or Gormo, in his perilous voyage to Biarmia and the dwelling of Geruth, as told by the historian Saxo. It is remarkable that most countries seem to have had such legendary navigators. What king Ulysses was to Greece, king Gorm was to Denmark, and Saint Brandan to Ireland. The Welsh had also their voyager, and on his legend they have rested a claim to the original discovery of America.

The monk who by narrating his own adventures incited Brandan to undertake his voyage, told him that he sailed direct east, till at last he came to paradise, which

was an island full of joy and mirth, and the earth shone as bright as the sun, and it was a glorious sight. A young man came to him and told him, "'By this ylonde is another ylond wheryn no man may come;' and this yong man sayd to them, 'Ye have ben here halfe a yere without mete, drynke, or slepe;' and they supposed that they had not ben there the space of halfe an houre, so merry and joyefull they were there."* Even when he arrived at Brandan's abbey, in Ireland, his garments still smelt of the odours of paradise. Brandan also reached paradise, and, with his companions, traversed it the space of forty days without meeting any one, till his progress was stopped by a fair river, on the banks of which he was met by a young man, who told him where he was, and said further that "Thys water that thou seest here departeth the world asondre. For on the other syde of thys water maye no man come that is in this lyf."

At the beginning of a MS. volume in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, is a map of the world, according to the ideas of our forefathers of the twelfth century.† In the extreme east the Ganges empties itself into the ocean, about the place where our modern map-makers are accustomed to place the most northerly of the Japanese

* One of the characteristics of fairy-land in the popular creed was, that a long period of time appeared but as a few hours.

† The Imago Mundi were written early in the twelfth century; at p. 58 in this manuscript, mention is made of king Henry of England, and the date 1110; and the writer adds, "quis autem post hunc regnum adeptus sit, posteritas videbit." It is an epitome of the philosophy of the age. At fol. 138 of that part of the manuscript which contains the journey to paradise, and which is in a later hand, we find, "Hic explicit tractatus spere.—Scriptus anno Dni. m°. cc°. lxxx°. tertio."

islands, and opposite the mouth of the Ganges appears the island of 'Paradisus.'* Near it, a little to the north, is 'Tilos insula,'† and a long way to the south-west appears Taprobana or Ceylon. In this volume is contained an early copy of the 'Imago Mundi,' a Latin treatise on the cosmography of the time, written at the beginning of the twelfth century, in which paradise is said to be the extreme region of Asia, towards the east, and to be rendered inaccessible by a wall of fire which surrounded it, and which reached to heaven. The writer of this treatise describes the infernal regions as being within the earth,

* Nearly all the maps of the world found in medieval manuscripts contain paradise, placed in the extreme east.

† During the middle ages, the imaginary island of Thyle often appears with many of the characteristics of paradise. In a tract in Leonine Latin verse, treating of wonderful things and their moralizations, (MS. Arund. in Mus. Brit. No. 201, fol. 44, v°.) we have the following description of it:

De insula Thile.

Non habet exile mundi decus insula Thile,
Hæc quia lignorum nescit casum foliorum;
Non ibi fronde nemus nudatur, oliva volemus,
Ficus, acer, cornus, pirus, alnus, amigdalus, ornus,
Nux, arbor quævis foliis viret omnibus ævis.

Mysterium.

Ut nobis visum, locus hic signat paradisum,
Deliciis plenum variis, sine fine serenum:
Arboreos fœtus superos intelligo cœtus.
Virtus sanctorum latet in specie foliorum.
Hiis non privatur arbor, nec quis spoliatur
Civis cœlestis illius tegmine vestis.
Tu res occultas cui solvere tanta facultas,
Si potes assigna cur sint ibi talia ligna,
Et capiti ponam de lauri fronde coronam.

and tells us some particulars of their geography, presenting a strange mixture of classical and biblical names: here we have 'Lacus vel terra mortis,' there 'Terra oblivionis,' in other parts, Tartarus, Gehenna, Erebus, Baratrum, Acheronta, Styx, Flegeton.

In the latter part of the same volume, which was written at the beginning of the fourteenth or end of the thirteenth century, we have a curious relation of the journey of three monks of Mesopotamia, to within twenty miles of Paradise.* Theophilus, one of the three, said to his fellows, "let us travel, and let us go to the place where heaven and earth join together," (illoque ire ubi cœlum se terræ conjungit.) They, accordingly, crossed the Tigris into Persia, and came to a vast level plain, called Asia, where Julian the apostate was killed. They then came to a city of Persia called 'Ketissephodo,' and after four months' travelling from this place entered India, where they took shelter in an empty house. The Ethiopians however discovered them, and taking them for spies, set fire to the house, and, when the pilgrims rushed out, took them and threw them into prison. The Ethiopians afterwards took them out of prison and expelled them from their land, and the three pilgrims went on for many days, until they came to a glorious and rich plain, covered with fine trees, and here they got plenty to eat. Then they entered the land of the 'Chananeans,' who, with their wives and children, lived among the rocks. They now journeyed towards the east for the space of a hundred and ten days, till they came to the country of a people called 'Pichichi,' who were only a cubit high, and fled in terror

* This narrative is printed in Surius, de Probatis SS. Vit. 23 Octob.

at the sight of our gigantic travellers. They next came to high and terrible mountains, between which the sun never shone, and neither tree nor grass grew, and they abounded with serpents and dragons, and basilisks and unicorns, and many other noxious animals. Seven days they travelled through these mountains, and afterwards came to mountains much more elevated, which were full of elephants, and then they entered a country were all was deep darkness. Having escaped from the dark vale, they came to a place where they found a column with an inscription setting forth that it had been placed there by Alexander the Great. Forty days more brought them to a large stinking lake, full of serpents, out of which issued lamentations and wailing, and this was the place of punishment for those who had denied their Saviour. After proceeding a little further they found two very high mountains, between which was a man more than a hundred cubits high, chained to the rocks, and tormented with fire. In another place among the high rocks, they saw a woman with a terrible dragon coiled around her, and, when she opened her mouth to speak, the dragon put in his head and bit her tongue. Then they arrived at a country full of great trees resembling fig-trees, and there were on them multitudes of animals like birds, which, with a human voice, cried out to God for mercy. After this they reached a glorious plain, where were four venerable old men with crowns of gold adorned with gems, having golden palms in their hands, and they said that they were placed there to guard the way, yet they suffered Theophilus and his companions to pass. Next appeared a country where there was a sweet smell and a pleasant sound of singing, and in the middle was a church, and in it a magnificent

altar, from which issued streams of a liquid like milk. Here the sun shone seven times lighter and warmer than with us. A hundred days further they found a multitude of people, none of them more than a palm in height, who, like the Pichichi, ran away from them, and they passed a river, and after a time found a beaten path. This led to a great cave, which they entered, and, finding nobody there, remained in it till evening, when, leaving the cave and looking towards the east, they saw approaching the figure of a man, whose hair, which was white as snow, floated in the wind, and covered his whole body. When he came to them, and drew aside the hair from before his face, they saw that his beard was also white, his nails long, and the skin of his face like that of a tortoise, and he seemed very old. They told him that the object of their journey was to find the point of junction between heaven and earth. He told them that it was only twenty miles from his cave, but that they must not venture any further. He had himself felt a great desire to travel onward, and see 'the end of the earth and of the pole,' but an angel appeared to him in a vision, and bade him desist. This man was St. Macarius. He related to them his life, and how he had been led by an angel to that cave. He then dismissed them, and they returned to the field of Asia, passed through 'Kitissephodo,' and over the Tigris, and regained their own monastery, situated between that river and the Euphrates, where they told their story to the monks.

In the popish legends we sometimes find souls punished in solitary spots of the world. St. Brandan found Judas exposed on a rock in the middle of the sea. Another medieval legend is still more extraordinary. A

party of fishermen in autumn drawing their net to land, found in it a large piece of ice, which they offered as a present to their bishop, Theobald, who was tormented with a burning heat—probably the gout—in his feet. The bishop kept it continually under his feet, and found great relief from it; but one day he was surprised to hear a voice within the ice. He conjured the voice to tell him what it was, and received for answer, "I am a soul tormented for my sins in this ice; and unless you say thirty masses every day for me during thirty successive days, I shall never be delivered." The charitable bishop commenced his task, but he was suddenly interrupted by the intelligence that an enemy was approaching the city with the design of taking and destroying it. When this danger had passed by, he began his masses again, but was as quickly stopped by the news of a civil commotion which had arisen within the city. The bishop now perceived that it was a trick of the evil one to frustrate his pious intentions: he recommenced his masses with the determination of continuing them to the end; and, although the whole city was suddenly perceived to be in flames, in spite of the urgent and frequent solicitations of his officers, and the outcries of the citizens, he allowed no interruption to turn him from his purpose. When he had pronounced the last mass the ice melted, the soul fled away, and the fire disappeared without having done any injury to the city.* This story bears a close resemblance in its character to some of the legends of eastern magicians.

However, as I have before observed, the most common and most generally authorized position of purgatory and

* Antonini archiep. Florent. quarta pars Summæ, (fol. 1480,) titulus xiv, cap. 10, § vii.

of hell was within the earth. It is thus described in the French 'Image du Monde,' written by Gautier de Metz, in 1245.* "I do not deny," he says, "that there may be a hell in other places besides this; for he who has merited it will have pain and evil after his death, wherever he may be:"

"Jou ne di pas qu'infers ne soit
Ailours, en quel liu qu ce soit;
Car après la mort partout a
Paine et mal qui deservi l'a."

"But now," he continues, "listen to me, if you have the patience, how hell is situated in the middle of the earth, and of what nature it is, and what are its punishments:"

"Or m'oiés, et si ne vous griet,
Coment infers en miliu siet
De la tere, et de quel nature
Il est, et de la paine dure
Que chil ont qui laiens sunt mis."

The writer then proceeds to describe its position. He says that it is a great gulf, filled with sulphurous fire, in comparison with which our earthly fire is but a mere shadow of the devouring element; there also are "perillous rivers, hideous with fire and with ice, full of devils and filthy beasts, which molest greatly the souls that are thrown into them."

"Là sunt li fleve perilleus,
De fu et de glace hideus,
Plain d'anemi et d'ordes bestes,
Qui ad ames font grans molestes."

The 'Image du Monde' is a scientific treatise; but it is

* This work is common in early manuscripts. My extracts are taken from a manuscript in the British Museum, MS. addit. 10105.

remarkable that even in the seventeenth century, in Roman Catholic countries, these same articles of belief remained in force. An Italian cosmographical writer as late as 1620, Rosaccio, places hell and purgatory within the earth; and in answer to the objection which might arise from the inadequacy of the space for the reception of the myriads of people, who will have been continually added to the inmates of the former place, he says that the souls of the damned have no right to expect as much room as the blessed saints in paradise. About the same time, a learned theologian of the Ambrosian College of Milan, named Antonius Rusca, wrote a bulky volume on this subject,* at the beginning of which he gives a number of diagrams showing the form and position of hell, purgatory, limbus, &c. within the mass of the earth. This writer lays it down as a certain fact that hell is within the earth,† in support of which he quotes the opinions even of the gentiles. He describes it as a great gap or opening in the earth, and proceeds to discuss the question of its shape, whether it be square, oblong, or pyramidal, and whether it consist of many receptacles or only of one extensive cavern. The author himself inclines to the latter opinion. He believes also that the fire, ice, serpents, and other instruments of punishment are corporeal, but eternal, and far more powerful than similar things in our world. He

* De Inferno, et Statu Dæmonum ante Mundi Exitium, Libri quinque. In quibus Tartarea cavitas, parata ibi cruciamentorum genera, Ethnicorum etiam de his opiniones, Dæmonumque conditio, usque ad magnum Judicii diem, varia eruditione describuntur. 4to, Milan, 1621.

† Non est dubium esse in profundissima terræ parte, ea nimirum qua nulla profundior, p. 125. Est ergo ingens quidam terræ hiatus, terra vacuus, in terræ corde existens, p. 135.

then treats at considerable length on the different kinds of torments, and in one part of the work he discusses the question, how there can be extreme cold (and ice) in the infernal abyss when there is no water there.* Antonius Rusca, although he did not believe that Etna, Vesuvius, and other burning mountains, were mouths of hell, yet he was of opinion that there are entrances or an entrance to the shades, "a certain steep way, sorrowful and dark;† though it is probable that the demons and souls can pass thither without doors or open entrance. The ecclesiastical censor, after having read through this mass of ridiculous dreaming, gravely states his judgment that the book contains nothing "contrary to morality or sound belief."‡ It is remarkable that Antonius Rusca finds stronger arguments for these vulgar notions of the infernal regions in the belief of the pagans of ancient and modern times than in sacred writ: we cannot help wondering that he did not see that they were foreign to Christianity.

As connected with this subject, we may notice another notion apparently derived from the popular creed concerning fairies and hobgoblins. It was believed that the tormenting demons where not punished themselves, and that they received no hurt among the raging flames and consuming frost; the Catholic writers say that this was a dispensation of providence, that the devils might not be discouraged in tempting men and punishing their souls.§

* See p. 250 of the work just quoted.

† Ergo declivis quædam via, tristis, et obscura, ad inferos patet, p. 172.

‡ Nec in eo quidquam aut bonis moribus aut sanæ fidei repugnans comprehendi.

§ This is stated by Francis Eximenès, in his Livre des Anges, a book rich in materials for the history of demonology. On Eximenès and his

In popular legends there were many and well-known entrances to the underground country of the Grecian shades, the western fairies, and the medieval Christians. In Italy the entrance to the regions below was at the Acherusia palus, by the Sibyl's cavern, and at Avernus. In Greece there were several entrances: one was at Hermione, in the Peloponnesus; and there was another at Tænarus, by which Pluto carried away Proserpine, and by which Hercules went in search of Cerberus. The hell of the Scandinavians lay towards the north, apparently deep in the ground. When Hermôdhr went thither to seek after the soul of Baldr, "he rode nine nights through dark and deep vales, so dark that he could see nothing, till he came to the river Giöll, and rode on the bridge over it, which was thatched with shining gold. The maiden who keeps the bridge is called Môdhgudhr: she asked him his name and kin, and said that the day before there rode over the bridge five bands (i. e. 250) of dead men. 'But my bridge rings not, save under thee alone,† and thou hast not the colour of dead men: why ridest thou here on hel's way?' He answered, 'I shall ride to hel to look for

work, see Paulin Paris, 'Les Manuscrits François de la Bibliothèque du Roi,' tom. ii, pp. 92–96. There is a fine copy of the Livre des Anges in the British Museum, MS. Reg. 16, G. iv. The passage alluded to occurs at fol. c.lx. "Le premier point est que les deables mainent les ames des dampnez en enfer, et selon aucuns mainent les bonnes deputées à salvation en purgatorie, et les tourmentent là sans ce que en enfer ne en purgatoire les diz deables seuffrent paines sensibles cest chalieur et froideur excessive, car tant qu'ilz sont viateurs nostre seigneur ne veult qu'ilz seuffrent telles paynes pour tant que la leur exercité à nous tempter ne soit empeschié ne occupée."

† This passage bears a singularly close resemblance to that in Virgil where the weight of Æneas almost sinks Charon's boat.

Baldr; but hast thou seen anything of Baldr on hel's way?' And she said that Baldr had ridden thither over the bridge of Giöll, 'but hel's way lies still deeper and more northward.' Then rode Hermôdhr forwards till he came to hel's grate."* The bridge of Giöll has its counterpart in our purgatory legends. I have already mentioned different entrances to fairy-land, among which one of the most remarkable was the Peak cavern in Derbyshire. In the Christian legends of the middle ages the volcanoes of the old world—Etna, Vesuvius, Hecla, &c.—were considered either as entrances to hell and purgatory, or as separate places of punishment. But there were other, less conspicuous ways, several of which were in Italy, and their fame had probably been handed down from the days of the Romans and Greeks. The old traveller, Sir John Maundevile, found an entrance to the infernal regions in the "vale perilous," in the kingdom of Prester John. "Sum men clepen it the vale enchanted, some clepen it the vale of develes, and some clepen it the vale perilous. In that vale heren men often tyme grete tempestes and thonders, and grete murmures and noyses, alle dayes and nyghtes, and gret noyse, as it were soun of taboures and of nakeres and trompes, as though it were of a gret feste. This vale is alle fulle of develes, and hathe ben alleweys; and men seyn there that it is on of the entrees of helle." A similar object of popular superstition was, in Ireland, the cave in the island of Lough Derg, which has obtained so much celebrity as St. Patrick's Purgatory.

* See Snorri's Edda, fab. 44, ed. Resen.

CHAPTER V.

Allegorical, satirical, and political applications of the visions—The pilgrimages of William de Deguilleville—Vision of Barontus—Raoul de Houdaing—Le songe d'enfer—La voie de paradis—Rutebeuf—Le salut d'enfer—Hugh de Berti: the tournament of Antichrist—Grecian visions—the cave of Trophonius—The Frogs of Aristophanes—Dante, the Divina Commedia—Vision of Alberic—Brunetto Latini—Comparison of the Divina Commedia with the older visions.

THESE visions of the other world having once become popular, they were soon turned to different purposes. They had been originally invented by the popish clergy to strike terror into the laity, and impress upon them certain doctrines which required something more than the mere force of preaching, such as the advantage of spending money on prayers and masses for the dead, the danger of robbing churches and monasteries, the necessity of paying tithes regularly, and the like, which were often neglected or despised in turbulent times. They were sometimes contrived to answer particular cases, of which we shall have instances in the course of our extracts: a new vision was published to put down some popular vice, or decry some extravagant fashion. Among the late Mr. Douce's manuscripts, now in the Bodleian library, there is a 'relation of a countess, who, for her love of superfluous

finery, was carried away to purgatory.'* Some writers founded allegories upon the older visions. In the first half of the fourteenth century, a French poet, named William de Deguilleville, in imitation of the plan of the elegant but licentious 'Romance of the Rose,' wrote three large poems under the title of the 'Pilgrimage of Human Life,' the 'Pilgrimage of the Soul,' and the 'Pilgrimage of Jesus Christ.' These poems are sometimes united under the general title of the 'Romance of the Three Pilgrimages.' They were the type of various later productions, among which the most celebrated was the 'Pilgrim's Progress' of John Bunyan.† The second of William de Deguilleville's 'Pilgrimages,' contains a long and detailed picture of the infernal regions. Sometimes the earlier visions were composed with an immediate and definite political object, as appears to have been the case with the vision of the emperor Charles the Fat, already describe.‡ An early dreamer, named 'Barontus,'§ monk of an

* Relatio de comitissa quadam propter ornatum superfluum ad infernum rapta. MS. Douce, No. 169.

† I believe that Mr. Nathaniel Hill, of the Royal Society of Literature, has been long occupied in researches on the history of the works of this class which preceded the publication of the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' and I have no doubt he will produce an interesting and valuable book.

‡ Another early vision, seen by a Frankish monk named Wettin in 824, in prose and in Latin verse by Walafrid Strabo, printed in the 'Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti,' sæc. iv, part 1, p. 263, had also a political object.

§ There is a copy of this vision, in a manuscript of the twelfth century, in the British Museum, MS. Cotton, Tiber, C. xi, fol. 22, v°. There was another copy of this vision in MS. Cotton, Otho A. xiii, which perished in the fire. It was there said to have occurred in the

abbey, named in the Latin narrative 'Longoretus,' in the district of Berry, in France, was, as he said, carried first through three paradises to the fourth paradise, where he was not allowed to remain, but was subsequently indulged with a distant vision of hell, which appeared to him a dark obscure place, covered with vaporous clouds. He describes no particular torments, as in the other visions, but says that sinners were sitting round a great area sorrowfully in chairs of lead, each particular class of criminals grouped together. He saw there two bishops, Dido and Uuolfrid, who were sitting miserably in the tattered garb of beggars. From the number of persons of his time whom the dreamer recognized, this vision appears to have had a political object: it was written in France. Other writers again gave the visions a grotesque or burlesque form, and transformed them into bitter satires on the vices of their contemporaries.

One of the most remarkable writers of this latter class was Raoul de Houdaing, a French trouvère, or poet, of the beginning of the thirteenth century, who published the 'Dream of

6th year of the reign of Theodoric, perhaps Theodoric IV, king of Austrasia and Burgundy, and in that case A.D. 726. The last-mentioned MS., which was written in England in the Saxon times, contained the relation of a vision shown to brother Rothearius, and a copy of the vision of Wettin. Among the early allegorical visions which preceded those mentioned in the following pages, we may indicate the 'Vision of Christ's Descent into Hell,' written in Latin verse early in the tenth century, by Ansellus Scolasticus, and printed by M. du Meril, 'Poesies Populaires Latines,' 8vo, 1843, p. 200, and the popular dispute between the body and the soul, also in Latin verse, printed by M. von Karajan, Frühlingsgabe, p. 80; in my 'Poems attributed to Walter Mapes,' p. 95, and in the interesting volume of M. du Meril, p. 217.

Hell,' and the 'Road to Paradise.'* In the former of these poems, the author tells us that he dreamt he set out on a pilgrimage to the infernal regions, which was 'a pleasant road and fair way:'

"Plesant chemin et bele voie
Truevent cil qui enfer vont querre."

The first night he reached the city of Covetousness, in the land of Disloyalty. He took up his lodging with Dame Envy, who, with her companions, were delighted to hear from the traveller that liberality had been banished from the earth, and that treachery had the chief honour in Poitou. On the second day he came to the town of Foi-Menti (Breach-of-faith,) and dined with the governor of the place, Monsieur Tolir, (Take-from.) His host was rejoiced to hear that his mortal enemy, Doners (Give-to,) was nearly destroyed. Thence the pilgrim went the same day to Tavern-town, and passed on his way the dangerous river of Gluttony. At Tavern-town he took up his lodging at the inn of Robbery, were he passed the night in company with Hasard (Gambling), Mesconte (Detraction), and Mestrais (Back-biting.) His new companions were much excited by the gratifying intelligence he brought them of the evil-doings of their disciples at Chartres and at Paris. Among the guests were Drunkenness, and her son Versez (Pour-out), with whom the pilgrim was obliged to wrestle, and by whom, after a struggle, he was thrown almost lifeless to the ground. The account of this contest bears a remarkable resemblance to some old English ballads of

* The 'Songe d'Enfer' is printed by M. Achille Jubinal, in the notes to his 'Mystères inédits,' vol. ii, pp. 384–403; and the 'Voie de Paradis,' is given by the same scholar, in his notes to 'Rutebeuf,' vol. ii, pp. 227–260.

the force of malt and ale, printed in the collection of Evans, and analogous with the still more popular ballad of Sir John Barleycorn.* Madame Drunkenness comforted him by telling him that he was not the only one whom her son had knocked down: "Companion, don't be surprised; many a one has fought with me at the tavern who has been knocked down in the struggle; even William of Salerna, who is so celebrated for his bravery and courage, I have beaten, I assure you, and in a moment thrown with his legs into the air."

"Compains, ne vous merveilliez pas:
Maint se sont à moi combatu
Qui au luitier sont abatu
Et au combatre en la taverne;
Neis Guilliaume de Salerne
C'on tient à preu et à hardi
Ai batu, bien le vous di,
Jambes levées à .i. tor."

This is, without doubt, a trait of effective contemporary satire. When Versez (Pour-out) has quitted his antagonist, Madame Drunkenness remains all night with the traveller, and leads him into still more blameable excesses. After leaving this place the pilgrim arrived at Despair, which was the 'montjoie,' or guide-stone of hell, and a league further came to Sudden-death, which was close to the entrance of the infernal regions. He found in the latter an hospitable custom which had long ceased to exist on the earth—the lords of the shades, whom he found preparing for table, dined with open doors, and willingly shared their hospitality

* See Evans's Ballads, pp. 220 and 224. On the old forms of the popular allegory of Sir John Barleycorn, see the Introduction to my 'Biographia Britannica Literaria,' Anglo-Saxon period, p. 79.

with all comers. Our traveller entered without ceremony the palace of hell, and there he was received with open arms by Pilate and Belzebub, and a host of clergy, bishops, and abbots. The king of the shades kept a rich table: there, among other dishes, they had fat usurers well basted with lard, plenty of thieves and murderers appropriately cooked, neat dishes of lawyers who defend wrong for good fees, tongues of false pleaders, different dishes of religious hypocrites and monks and nuns. Then the king of the lower regions exhibited a great book, in which the pilgrim saw the wicked actions of minstrels and jongleurs. The poet afterwards took his leave, and the dream ends, but he promises a similar visit to paradise:

"Après orrez de Paradis,
Diex nous i maint et noz amis!"

On his way to paradise the pilgrim came to Grace, who led him to the house of Love, whose steward was Fear: and next he visited two cousins, Discipline and Obedience, and afterwards Groaning, and Penitence, and Sighing. The latter instructed him in the road he was to follow. By her directions he sought Contrition and Confession, but in his way he was attacked by Temptation, from whom he was rescued by Hope, who led him to Faith. He was subsequently seduced from his way by the trifling vanities of the world, in the shape of a party of jongleurs and players in a valley on the banks of a fair river, and was nearly destroyed by the renewed attacks of Temptation, if he had not been rescued by the sudden arrival of some of the virtues. He then came to the foot of a ladder, which eventually led him to paradise.

Raoul de Houdaing lived at the beginning of the thirteenth century. He was followed by a still more celebrated poet,

Rutebeuf, who published a poem under the same title, 'Of the Way of Paradise.'* The dream of Rutebeuf (for it is written in this form) bears a close resemblance to that of his predecessor: when the poet begins his pilgrimage, he finds himself in a fair way, accompanied by multitudes of people, the larger part of whom soon leave the direct path for a more inviting road which branches off to the left, while that to the right becomes narrower and more painful. Our pilgrim arrives first at the city of Penitence; his host and hostess were named Pity and Charity, who tell him how they were exposed to the attacks of Avarice, Envy, Vainglory, and Pride, and direct him on the way to his next resting-place, the house of Confession. A little on the way, to the left, stood the castle of Pride, who was always on the look out to seduce the travellers; further, in a small valley, was the house of dame Avarice; and next he had to pass the still more dangerous dwelling of Madame Ire. The residences of all these persons are described with minute details. Envy dwelt still further on, at the bottom of a dark valley. After this the pilgrim had to avoid successively the strong holds of Accidie (or Carelessness), Gluttony, and Luxury. Eventually he arrives at the house of lady Humility, the greatest enemy of baron Pride. Having escaped the dangers of the way, the remainder of his route lay by the dwellings of Abstinence, Chastity, and Repentance. We have here much of the imagery which reappeared at a later period in such works as the 'Pilgrim's Progress.'

We have seen that Raoul de Houdaing found the demons

* Oeuvres complètes de Rutebeuf, edited by M. Achille Jubinal, tom. ii, p. 21.

at table; an anonymous poet of the same century, in a short piece, entitled *'Le Salut d'Enfer,'** has described their dinner. Among other dishes there was an usurer boiled in the pot, several false coiners roasted, and two false judges in choice sauce. These were the three classes most injurious to society in the thirteenth century. There were also abundance of luxurious monks and nuns, cooked in every possible manner.

Another French poet, of the earlier part of the thirteenth century, probably acontemporary of Raoul de Houdaing, was Hugo de Berti,† who has left us a similar allegorical poem, entitled the 'Tournament of Antichrist.' The writer has a vision: in a thick wood he meets with a personage named Bras-de-Fer (Iron-arm), who attacks him, and obliges him to be his follower. He subsequently informs him that he is the porter of hell and the chamberlain of Antichrist. They proceed on their way, and arrive at a town called Esperanche (Hope), where they take up their lodgings. Antichrist arrives soon after; his host is so numerous that many of them are obliged to seek lodgings in the fields. Antichrist met with a magnificent reception, and a great feast was given, with abundance of wine; but the poet, who sat beside a minstrel, saw on the table no ordinary dishes, such as beans or pease, or eggs or herrings;

* Printed by Jubinal, in his very curious collection entitled 'Jongleurs et Trouvères,' 8vo, Paris, 1835, p. 43.

† It appears that, in the manuscripts in France, (I judge from the description by Roquefort) this author is called Huon de Meri. There is, in the British Museum, MS. Harl. 4417, a very fine manuscript of the *Tornoiement d'Antecrist*, probably contemporary with its author, in which the name is distinctly written Hugon de Berti. It is said to have been composed about the year 1228. It has never been printed.

the feast, he says, was just such a one as had previously been described by Raoul de Houdaing, with the exception of one dish, which was composed of a vice that appears to have been but too characteristic of the age when Romanism was most triumphant:

"Avoec .i. jongleour m'asis,
Ki trop savoit son Poitevin.
De divers vies, de divers vins,
Fumes plenierement assis.
Mais saciés bien c'onkes n'i vi
Feves ne pois, oef ne herenc;
Tous les més Raoul de Hadenc
Eumes, sans faire riot,
Fors que d'un entremés i ot
D'une mervilleuse friture,
De peciés fais contre nature,
Flaus en la sausse cartaigne."

We have then a grotesque description of the feast. The guests eat up the dish just described so fast, that it never reached the dreamer—he was too poor for such delicacies.

"Que li entremés dusk' à moi
Ne vint pas, et nonpourquant gié
N'en eusse par droit mangié,
Car ce n'est pas més à povre home."

There was, however, great feasting and much merriment. Nevertheless, they arose very early the next morning, and the whole host proceeded on its way. This host consisted of not less than ten thousand banners: there were all the vices, with the whole army of hell, headed by their king and queen "Plouto" and Proserpine. Among the rest are enumerated all the classic deities. Beelzebub was Antichrist's standard-bearer. The arms and equipments of the combatants are minutely described. They proceed to the

lists, which are established near the city of Desesperanche (Despair), about two leagues from Esperanche; at the former place they take up their lodgings. "Desesperanche is the mountjoy of hell," as Raoul says,

"Desesperance est la monjoie
D'ynfer, ensi com Raous dit."

On the eve of the tournament the king of paradise came to the city of Esperanche, attended also by a great company, among which were all the virtues. They are described in the same manner as the forces of the other party. The poet then relates the fortunes of the fight. The whole is a bitter satire upon the times. Among the forces of Antichrist appears a body of heretics from the south of France, the country of the persecuted Albigeois:

"De Biois et de Tolousain,
Et de Painne et de Mielan,
I ot milliers et ne sai quans
De bougres et de popelicans,
Ki vinrent par une posterne;
Mais par la cité de Beterne
Orent passé .i. jour avant,
Saintefois lor vienent au devant,
Et freres Robers li bougiers."

The dreamer is wounded by an arrow shot at another person, and is left on the field. Antichrist and his people are beaten, and retreat towards hell, "by the road which Raoul describes:"

"Le chemin ke Raous descrist."

The dreamer is taken up and healed by the Virtues, and is thus rescued from the service of Bras-de-fer and the army of Antichrist. He is intrusted first to the keeping of Largess, and is finally delivered over to the care of 'Madame Religion.'

It appears by the allusions in this curious poem, that that of Raoul de Houdaing had become very popular. Towards the end of this century, and at the beginning of the next, this allegorical style became still more fashionable, and in the fourteenth century it appeared in various important works, such as the French 'Romance of the Rose,' and the English 'Visions of Piers Ploughman.' It is not improbable that the incidents of Christ's tournament in the last-mentioned poem are founded upon Hugh de Berti's 'Tournament of Antichrist:'

"Than I frayned (*asked*) at Feith,
What al that fare by-mente,
And who sholde juste in Jerusalem.
'Jhesus,' he seide—
'Who shal juste with Jhesus?' quod I.—
'Nay,' quod he; 'the foule fend,
And fals doom and deeth.'"*

The Tartarus and Hades of ancient Greece were sometimes moralized and burlesqued in the same manner as the purgatory and hell of the middle ages. Among the philosophers of antiquity, and more especially among those of the Platonic school, we meet not unfrequently with allegorical descriptions of the regions of the shades. We may instance, in Plato himself, the accounts of the infernal judges at the end of his 'Gorgias,' of Tartarus in the 'Phædo,' and of the vision of Er the Armenian in the 'Republic.' Plutarch, in his treatise on the 'Demon of Socrates,' describes the vision of Timarchus in the cave of Trophonius, which bears a striking resemblance

* Piers Ploughman, p. 370. There is a remarkable analogy between the latter part of this celebrated poem and the 'Tournoiement d'Antecrist.'

to our purgatory visions. He remained in the cave two nights and one day. At first he found himself surrounded with thick darkness; then he began gradually to see around him. He beheld a great sea, with islands floating in it: two fiery rivers rushed into it from opposite quarters. When he looked downwards he perceived "a vast round gulf, (χάσμα μέγα στρογγύλον), as of a truncated sphere, very fearful and deep, full of much darkness, which however was not tranquil, but frequently troubled and disturbed, whence was heard thousands of howlings and groans of living beings, and the wailing of thousands of children, and the mingled lamentations of men and women, and all sorts of noises and uproars were transmitted to his ears faintly, as being from a great depth below, with which he was exceedingly terrified." This was Tartarus; and Timarchus saw innumerable stars flying and tossed about in the gulf, which were souls. In another tract (De tard. justit. Div.) Plutarch relates a very curious vision of a Greek named Thespesius, who found a purgatory in the sky, and which is remarkable as containing an incident similar to that of the smiths in the legend of Tundale. I have already pointed out how the Greek poets burlesqued paradise; they likewise treated hell in the same manner as the poets of the thirteenth century. Aristophanes, in his comedy of the 'Frogs,' introduces Bacchus, the patron of the stage, lamenting the want of tragedians since the death of Euripides. He determines to descend into the lower world, and emulate Hercules by dragging back Euripides from the shades. He equips himself in the same dress and armour as the hero wore, and, attended by his servant Xanthius, repairs to Hercules to inquire the way; he desires particularly to know all the crossways, towns, taverns,

cook-shops, &c. on the road. At first Hercules answers him in jest; but finding that he is determined to undertake the journey, he informs him that after travelling a long way he will arrive at a great and bottomless lake, over which he will be ferried by an old man for two oboli. "After this thou wilt see serpents, and an infinite number of the most terrible beasts . . . . then much mud with ever-flowing ordure, in which are laid those who have injured their guests, or robbed orphans of their heritage, or beaten their own mothers, or struck their fathers on the cheek, or sworn false oaths :"—

μετὰ ταῦτ' ὄφεις καὶ θηρί' ὄψει μυρια
δεινότατα . . . . . .
εἶτα βόρβορον πολὺν
καὶ σκῶρ ἀείνων' ἐν δὲ τούτῳ κειμένους
εἴ που ξένον τις ἠδίκησε πώποτε,
ἢ παῖδα κινῶν τάργύριον ὑφείλετο,
ἢ μητέρ' ἠλόησεν, ἢ πατρὸς γνάθον
ἐπάταξεν, ἢ 'πίορκον ὅρκον ὤμοσεν.

After this he would see the happy place of those purified persons who had been initiated in the mysteries, where was joy, and music, and dancing. The two voyagers arrive at the water, and find the boat, but Xanthias, as a slave, is obliged to walk round the lake. Bacchus, when in the boat, is compelled to row, and he is much incommoded by the croaking of the frogs with which the infernal lake abounded. On the other side he meets Xanthias, and they wander about in the mire and darkness, and are frightened by spectres, until they come to the place of the happy initiated, and then they inquire the road to Pluto's house. The cowardice of Bacchus, in the garb of Hercules, leads to many ludicrous incidents. When he announces himself at Pluto's door, Æacus comes forward, and threatens to punish Hercules for all the violences and insults he had

committed against the infernal monarch. Bacchus, in his terror, persuades Xanthias to change clothing with him; and then a messenger from Proserpine comes to invite Hercules to a feast, which is nearly ready, and she describes the beauty of the dancing girls. Xanthias is now unwilling to give up his newly-assumed character, which leads to a quarrel with his master. Then Æacus again makes his appearance, and beats them both in order to discover which is the god, as each endeavours to throw the character of Hercules on the shoulders of the other. The play ends by their preferring Æschylus to Euripides.

The poets of the thirteenth century, who had sung of purgatory and paradise, were, at the beginning of the fourteenth, thrown into the shade by the immortal *terze rime* of Dante. The 'Divina Commedia' of the poet of Florence has transmitted to modern ages the popular belief and knowledge of a period which has hitherto been very little understood by modern readers; who have therefore frequently set down to his inventive imagination pictures and notions which were familiar to his contemporaries. Commentators have laboured to discover hidden meanings and allegorical descriptions, where an acquaintance with the popular science of the age of Dante would have shown nothing but literal description.* I am satisfied that a diligent study of the literature of the thirteenth century is necessary for the explanation and appreciation of this

* Several of the old editions of Dante, as that of Giunta, in 1506, contain a dialogue on the situation of the hell, purgatory, and paradise of Dante, illustrated with diagrams. At a subsequent period, a separate treatise was published by Pier Francesco Giambullari, 'De' l sito, forma, e misure, dello Inferno di Dante.' Some of the modern editions and translations contain diagrams or maps illustrative of Dante's system.

celebrated poem. It is but recently that some writers have pointed out the class of legends to which the present essay is devoted as the real groundwork of Dante's imagery.* It is supposed by these writers that Dante was more immediately influenced by a vision said to have been exhibited in Italy to a child named Alberic, at the beginning of the twelfth century.

Alberic, when he wrote his vision, was a monk of Monte Cassino. His father was a baron, lord of the castle de' Sette Fratelli, in the Campagna of Rome. In his tenth year, the child Alberic was seized with a languor, and lay nine days and nine nights in a trance, to all appearance dead. As soon as he had fallen into this condition, a white bird, like a dove, came and put its bill into his mouth, and seemed to lift him up, and then he saw St. Peter and two angels, who carried him to the lower regions. St. Peter told him that he would see the least torments first, and afterwards, successively, the more terrible punishments of the other world. They came first to a place filled with red-hot burning cinders and boiling vapour, in which little children were purged; those of one year old being subjected to this torment during seven

* In 1814, Francesco Cancellieri published, at Rome, a very learned and interesting volume under the title of 'Osservazioni . . . . sopra l'Originalità della Divina Commedia di Dante.' The vision of Alberic is published in this work. Further illustrations of this subject are given by Ozanam, Dante et la Philosophie Catholique au treizième siècle, 1839. Abstracts of several of the early visions, compared with Dante, are given in the essay attached to the German translation of the 'Divina Commedia,' by Kopitsch, 8vo, Berlin, 1842. We have also the essay by M. Labitte, 'La Divine Comédie avant Dante,' Paris, 1843, (published with the translation of Dante by A. Brizeux. I only obtained a sight of this essay as my last proofs were going to press, or I should have made more use of it.)

days: those of two years, fourteen days; and so on, in proportion to their age. Then they entered a terrible valley, in which Alberic saw a great number of persons plunged to different depths, according to their different degrees of criminality, in frost, and cold, and ice, which consumed them like fire; these were adulterers, and people who had led impure lives. Then they approached a still more fearful valley, filled with trees, the branches of which were long spikes, on which hung women transfixed through their breasts, while venemous serpents were sucking them; these were women who had refused pity to orphans. Other women, who had been faithless to the marriage bed, were suspended by the hair over raging fires. Next he saw an iron ladder, three hundred and sixty cubits long, red hot, and under it a great boiler of melted oil, pitch, and resin; married persons who had not been continent on sabbaths and holy days were compelled to mount this ladder, and ever as they were obliged to quit their hold by the heat, they dropped into the boiler below. Then they beheld vast fires in which were burnt the souls of tyrannical and cruel lords, and of women who had destroyed their offspring. Next was a great space full of fire like blood, in which homicides were thrown; and after this there stood an immense vessel filled with boiling brass, tin, lead, sulphur, and resin, in which were immersed during three years those who had encouraged wicked priests. They next came to the mouth of the infernal pit, (*os infernalis baratri,*) a vast gulf, dark, and emitting an intolerable stench, and full of screaming and howling. By the pit was a serpent of infinite magnitude, bound by a great chain, the one end of which seemed to be fastened in the pit; before the mouth of this serpent stood a multitude

of souls, which he sucked in like flies at each breath, and then, with the return of respiration, blew them out scorched to sparks;* and this process continued till the souls were purged of their sins. The pit was so dark that Alberic could not see what was going on in hell. After quitting this spot, Alberic was conducted first to a valley in which persons who had committed sacrilege were burnt in a sea of flames; then to a pit of fire in which simonists were punished; next to a place filled with flames, and with serpents and dragons, in which were tormented those who, having embraced the monastic profession, had quitted it and returned to a secular life; and afterwards to a great black lake of sulphureous water, full of serpents and scorpions, in which the souls of detractors and false witnesses were immersed to the chin, and their faces continually flogged with serpents by demons who hovered over them. On the borders of hell, Alberic saw two "malignant spirits" in the form of a dog and a lion, which he was told blew out from their fiery mouths all the torments that were outside of hell, and at every breath the souls before them were wafted each into the peculiar punishment appropriated to him. The visitor was here left for a moment by his conductors; and the demons seized upon him, and would have thrown him into the fire, had not St. Peter suddenly arrived to rescue him. He was carried thence to a fair plain, where he saw thieves carrying heavy collars of iron,

* Juxta quem infernum vermis erat infinitæ magnitudinis, ligatus maxima catena, cujus catenæ alterum caput in inferno ligatum esse videbatur, ante os ipsius vermis animarum stabat multitudo, quas omnes quasi muscas simul absorbebat, ita ut cum flatum traheret omnes simul deglutiret, cum flatum emitteret omnes in favillarum modum rejiceret exustas.

red hot, about their necks, hands, and feet. He saw here a great burning pitchy river, issuing from hell, and an iron bridge over it, which appeared very broad and easy for the virtuous to pass, but when sinners attempted it, it became narrow as a thread, and they fell over into the river, and afterwards attempted it again, but were not allowed to pass until they had been sufficiently boiled to purge them of their sins. After this the apostle showed Alberic an extensive plain, three days' and three nights' journey in breadth, covered with thorns and brambles, in which souls were hunted and tormented by a demon mounted on a great and swift dragon, and their clothing and limbs torn to pieces by the thorns as they endeavoured to escape from him; by degrees they were purged of their sins, and became lighter, so that they could run faster, until at last they escaped into a very pleasant plain, filled with purified souls, where their torn members and garments were immediately restored; and here Alberic saw monks and martyrs, and good people, in great joy. He then proceeded through the habitations of the blessed. In the midst of a beautiful plain, covered with flowers, rose the mountain of paradise, with the tree at the top. After having conducted the visitor through the seven heavens, the last of which was held by Saturn, they brought him to a wall, and let him look over, but he was forbidden to tell what he had seen on the other side. They subsequently carried him through the different regions of the world, and showed him many extraordinary things, and, among the rest, some persons subjected to purgatorial punishments in different places on the earth.

There are, perhaps, more points of similitude between the poem of Dante and this Italian vision than in any of

those which originated in the more western parts of Europe, although they all contain incidents more or less similar to some parts of the details of the 'Divina Commedia.' Dante evidently copies incidents from the vision of Owain. He is said also to have imitated an allegorical treatise written by his teacher, Brunetto Latini, whom the poet places in a very unenviable position in the other world, though he is only known to modern times by his '*Trésor*,' or Encyclopedia of the knowledge of his age, written in French, and still preserved in manuscript, and by the tract alluded to, a treatise in Italian, entitled '*Tesoretto*,' or the little Treasury.*

In Dante the legends are adopted as a means of conveying political, moral, and theological doctrines; and, like Milton, the poet of Florence has softened down the harshness of Gothic imagery with the elegant pictures and sentiments of the classic poets of ancient times, which had then more influence in Italy than in the more western parts of Europe. He chooses Virgil for his guide, as an intimation that he had ingrafted the descriptions of the western purgatory legends on the groundwork afforded him by the Mantuan poet.

In one respect the 'Divina Commedia' differs essentially from the monkish visions. In the latter, the visitor is never allowed to enter the pit of hell; from thence *none* ever return; and there all are punished with torments of equal intensity. On the contrary, it is to this part of the

* The Tesoretto was published by Zannoni, in an octavo volume, in 1824, but I have not been able to obtain a sight of a copy. There are, in the British Museum, two fine manuscripts of the 'Trésor' of Brunetto Latini, MS. Reg. 19, C. x, of the fourteenth century, and MS. Reg. 17, E. i, of the fifteenth.

other world that Dante is conducted first. The poet finds himself in the middle of a dark and pathless wood, exposed to the rage of three savage beasts, a panther, a lion, and a wolf, (emblematical of the temptations to which we are exposed from sensuality, ambition, and avarice,) from which he is rescued by the shade of Virgil, who has been sent to his assistance by the spirit of Beatrice. Virgil tells him that his only way to escape his persecutors lies through hell and purgatory, and leads him down a deep woody vale to the entrance of the infernal region. At the entrance of hell they see the punishment of the idle and slothful, and of those who, from cowardice and listlessness, had neither identified themselves with the virtuous nor with the wicked in the active struggle of human life. After being carried over the Stygian lake in Charon's boat, the two poets arrive at the limbus of the ancients, where the virtuous poets, philosophers, and heroes, who lived before Christ, and were therefore unacquainted with salvation, were confined in a kind of elysium, in which they lived in sadness, though without other punishment. This was the place of Adam, and the patriarchs and prophets, till they were released by Christ. They then passed the tribunal of Minos, who was judging the souls, and came successively to the second and third regions, where the souls of lawless lovers and luxurious men were exposed to fearful storms of hail and snow, and driven about by the tormenting fiends; and to the fourth and fifth regions, in the first of which were punished the souls of misers and prodigals, and in the other those who had been actuated by rage, selfishness, and envy. The infernal judge appears in the vision of Alberic, and also, in a varied form, in that of Thurcill: the storms of hail and snow are found in several

of the earlier visions. Dante and his guide then pass in a boat the filthy lake in which the envious are plunged and tormented, and arrive at the citadel of Satan, which still bore marks of the breaches made in its walls and battlements when the Saviour "harrowed hell." The idea of this citadel appears to be taken from the vision of St. Paul.

At first the visitors are denied admittance within the walls, but afterwards they are allowed to pass the gates by the interference of a powerful spirit, and arrive at the place of punishment for heretics, where Dante sees the souls of his ancient friend Guido Cavalcanti, of the emperor Frederick II, the obstinate opponent of pope Honorius III,

> "Dissemi: qui con più di mille giaccio,
> Qua entro è lo secondo Federico,
> E 'l cardinale, e degli altri mi taccio." (CANTO X.)

and, on the verge of this circle, that of pope Anastasius. They next descend to the region of oppression, in which the souls of tyrants are immersed in a vast raging flood of blood, and are pursued by the centaurs, who make them continually the buts of their arrows: here Dante recognized many of the actors in the turbulent events of the thirteenth century, with the souls of Attila, Tarquin, and others of an older date; and, among the rest, the youthful Guy de Montfort, who had avenged the slaughter of his father at Evesham, by killing Henry Plantagenet (the son of Richard, king of the Romans) in the church of Viterbo.

> "Poco più oltre il centauro s'affisse
> Sovra una gente che infino alla gola,
> Parea che di quel bulicame uscisse.
> Mostrocci un' ombra dall' un canto sola,
> Dicendo: colui fesse in grembo a Dio,
> Lo cor che in sul Tamigi ancor si cola." (CANTO XII.)

The oppressors are subjected to a punishment somewhat similar in the vision of the emperor Charles. Over this dreadful lake the poets are carried on the back of one of the centaurs, and arrive at the forest of suicide. Those who have been guilty of that crime are here punished strangely in the form of trees. Beyond was a plain of burning sand, inhabited by the souls of atheists and blasphemers. The travellers next come to the banks of the river Phlegeton, and journey along its banks, passing the souls of those who had been guilty of crimes against nature, till they arrive at the edge of the region of fraud, a mighty gulf, down which they are carried on the back of a fearful monster, named Geroneo, who lands them near the centre of the infernal regions, in the vale of Malebolge. Here they see successively the punishments of pandars, seducers, and parasites, who are perpetually scourged by the fiends, and condemned to remain in continual filth. In the gulf of simony, plunged in consuming fire, they beheld, among others, pope Nicholas III. Next they saw people with their faces turned behind them, marching slowly and painfully in a circle; these were persons who had pried into futurity, and who were now obliged to look backwards; among them was Michael Scotus.

"Quell' altro, che ne' fianchi è così poco
Michele Scotto fu, che veramente
Delle magiche frode seppe il giuoco." (CANTO XX.)

Further on was a boiling pitchy river, with bridges over, in which are thrown the souls of men who sell justice: the river and bridges occur in several of the older visions. They pass the dangerous bridge, and visit successively other gulfs, where are punished those who are guilty of bribery, hypocrites, robbers, men who have com-

mitted sacrilege, and who have abused great talents to bad purposes; in the region of the schismatics, murderers, and exciters of sedition, the soul of Mahomet is conspicuous. Next they come to the region of the alchemists, and other imposters. The ninth region, divided into four circles, is the place of punishment of different kinds of perfidy; around the border are placed a guard of giants, among whom were Nimrod, Ephialtes, and Antæus. Antæus lifts the poets over the barrier; and in this last part of hell they behold the punishments of fratricide, treason, and ingratitude. In the central and deepest point they find Satan, in the midst of eternal ice and snow filled with suffering souls frozen fast, grinding in his jaws the souls of Judas, Brutus, and Cassius. The closing cantos of the 'Inferno' bear considerable resemblance to some incidents of the vision of Tundale.

Satan was fixed in the centre of the earth, from whence, passing under his wings, they are carried through the earth's mass to the foot of the mountain of purgatory, which is represented as rising from the antipodes. Dante has transferred to hell most of the details of the monkish purgatory, and we find in his purgatory a greater portion of allegory and imagination. The poets find the entrance to the mount of purgatory guarded by the shade of Cato of Utica; they enter with a company of newly-arrived souls, and ascend with difficulty the mountain by a very narrow pass, where they see a multitude of souls who had delayed penitence for their sins until the last moment; their negligence was punished by a long confinement in the vestibule of purgatory. Near these they found also the shades of those who, before repenting, had been cut off by violent death. These discover that Dante is not

dead, because his body casts a shadow, which is not the case with themselves. In his way through the region of the negligent, the poet meets with the souls of many distinguished contemporaries. They ask him to aid them (with prayers, &c.) on his return to earth. At length the pilgrims reach the gate of purgatory, and, being admitted, they arrive first at the place destined for the purgation of the proud, who stooped under heavy loads which they were obliged continually to carry. They then mount to the second stage, where envy is purged, the guilty souls being punished by hot wires encircling their eyes. Next they mount to the region of the angry and wrathful, who are punished in darkness. The fourth stage is devoted to the purgation of the selfish; the next to that of the crime of avarice, where the poet meets the spirits of pope Adrian IV and Hugh Capet. A little further the poets overtake the soul of Statius, who is pursuing his way to paradise, and they mount in company to the stage of intemperance; and at length reach the seventh and last stage, the region set apart for the purgation of lust, by raging fires. On quitting this stage, the three companions are obliged to pass through a vast purgatorial fire, whence they emerge into a forest which skirts the earthly paradise. Here Virgil leaves Dante to his own guidance, and returns to his place in limbus. As Dante wanders through the forest, he comes to a clear river, and meets a beautiful nymph, who is occupied in singing holy hymns and gathering beautiful flowers. This river is found in the voyage of St. Brandan. After Virgil leaves the pilgrim, the sainted form of Beatrice appears and conducts him over the water (which is the river of Lethe) to the earthly paradise, and

he arrives at length at the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which crowns the summit of the mountain.

In the third division of this remarkable poem, Dante is carried by Beatrice from the earthly paradise, through the nine heavens or spheres. In the first, the region of the moon, he beholds the spirits of nuns, who had been violently compelled to infringe their monastic vow. Hence they ascend to the planet Mercury, where they meet with the spirit of the emperor Justinian. In the next heaven, the sphere of the planet Venus, he meets his contemporary, Charles king of Hungary. In the sphere of the sun, the poet confers with the spirits of Aquinas and several other holy doctors of the church. Next he is led to the planet Mars, where he sees the spirits of virtuous heroes, patriots, and champions of the faith. In the planet Jupiter he found the souls of just and courageous judges. In the planet Saturn were the spirits of those who had passed their lives in holy and philosophic contemplation, and Dante converses with the spirit of St. Benedict. He then rises to the eighth, or starry heaven, where he is indulged with a vision of Christ, and converses with St. Peter, St. James, St. John, and Adam. He thence passes through the ninth sphere to the empyreum, occupied by the angels and beatified spirits. Here Beatrice resumes her place, and delivers the poet to the conduct of St. Bernard, who shows and explains to him the other wonders of heaven.

CHAPTER VI.

St. Patrick and his Purgatory; recapitulation—Giraldus Cambrensis—Lives of the Saint—First publication of the legend; Gilbert de Luda and Henry of Saltrey—Visits to Patrick's Purgatory in the Fourteenth Century—Raymond de Perilhos—The Romance of Guerrino il Meschino Froissart—Vision of William Staunton in 1409.

It appears from the foregoing pages that visions of purgatory, although rare, were not however unknown before the date of the first publication of the wonders of the Purgatory of St. Patrick. We have seen that the most remarkable of these early legends were connected with Ireland, a circumstance which is probably explained by the superstition with which that island was regarded as being situated in the extreme west, the land of the shades. I have shown also how these visions were founded on the popular belief of the people, derived from a still more ancient creed, antecedent to the introduction of Christianity. There are reasons for believing that the cave was the subject of older legends, arising from its physical character: similar legends have been formed under similar circumstances in other places. We shall find that it was some years after the pretended descent of the knight Owain, before the purgatory legend became absolutely identified with the place.

We perceive some traces of the origin of the legend in the account given by Giraldus, of the island in Lough Derg, which he places among the wonderful islands in Ireland. It was, he says, divided into two parts, of which one was

fair and pleasant, and contained a church, which was considered a place of great sanctity; while the other part was wild and rough, and believed to be inhabited only by demons (hobgoblins). In this part of the island, he adds, there were nine pits, in any of which, if a person were bold enough to pass the night, he would be so much tormented by the demons that it was a chance if he were found alive in the morning; and it was reported that he who escaped alive, would, for the torments he suffered here, be relieved from the torments of the other world. Giraldus ends by telling us that the natives called the place Patrick's Purgatory; and that it was said that the saint had obtained from God this public manifestation of the punishments and rewards of the other world, in order to convince his incredulous hearers.* Giraldus wrote his topography of Ireland, from which this account is taken, long after the date of the visit of the knight Owain.

Among the unconverted pagans of the west, and in the earlier ages of Christianity, all wild and less accessible districts were believed to be peopled with spiritual beings of different kinds, elves, nymphs, and, in later times, hobgoblins and demons. The first saints, such as Guthlac and Botolf, undertook to expel these imaginary beings from their haunts; and, labouring under ancient prejudices, they believed that in the wildernesses, where they had taken up their abode, they were continually tormented by their attacks. We see frequent instances in our own days of the ease with which men's imaginations may be thus acted upon. It is probable that the island in Lough Derg, from its wildness and from its remarkable physical character, (containing caverns from which strange evaporations

* Girald. Cambr. Topographia Hiberniæ, cap. v.

issued,) had been considered the abode of hobgoblins and demons, and that the church had been first built there by some pious hermits who, like Guthlac, sought to drive from the place its ungodly tenants. The story of the purgatory was an after-thought: the twelfth century was an age, and Ireland a country, of pious frauds.

The early lives of St. Patrick throw little light on our subject, because the older biographies do not mention his purgatory, and those which mention it are more modern than the narrative of Henry of Saltrey. All the old lives of this saint, which could be discovered, were published in one volume by Colgan.* We can, in general, place little confidence in the good faith of the Roman Catholic writers of the age of the Reformation, or of that which followed: they seem to have considered that every kind of deceit which tended to raise themselves, or lower their opponents, was lawful; and their party feelings destroyed every sentiment of impartial criticism. Colgan boldly asserts the extreme antiquity of lives of St. Patrick, which carry with them glaring internal evidence of their recent date. I believe that the life of St. Patrick is a mere tissue of fables, and that none of his biographies are of any great antiquity. Some of those to which Colgan gives the most remote antiquity, appear to be compiled from that of Jocelin, written after 1180, and they give different and contradictory stories. The third life printed by Colgan, states that St. Patrick received the *baculus Jhesu* from a hermit; it relates how he drove all the demons and hobgoblins out of Ireland; and it contains a story how king

* Colgan, Trias Thaumaturga, fol. Louvaine, 1647. The life by Jocelin is also published in the Acta Sanctorum Bolland. Mart. vol. ii.

Echu died, and how Patrick raised him from the dead, and made him relate what he had seen in the other world of the punishments inflicted on the impious and of the happiness of the saints, to convince his incredulous hearers.* In the fourth life we read of a chief named Oengus, who opposed St. Patrick, and employed two magicians to plague him. From the seventh life we learn that St. Patrick brought the *baculus Jhesu* from an island in the Tyrrhene sea, under very remarkable circumstances, (p. 122.)† It is here stated that the saint expelled the hobgoblins from Ireland only for seven years, seven months, and seven days (p. 138), and the story of the king who was raised from the dead, and told what he had seen in the other world, is repeated.

In Joscelin, the story of the expulsion of the hobgoblins and the foundation of purgatory are joined in one legend; and he places the site of the latter, not in an island cave, but at the top of a mountain. Thither, he says, the saint used to repair to fast and pray, it being a solitary spot, and the demons came to disturb him in the shape of blackbirds. Patrick drove them out of Ireland by the sound of a drum, which he continued beating at them until he cracked it, when it was immediately mended by an angel. The mark of the crack was still visible on this holy relic in Joscelin's time. Subsequently many persons used to go to fast and pray at the summit of the mountain, believing that St. Patrick had obtained from God that all

* Et post hæc coram omni populo dixit ei: 'Narra nobis omnia quæ vidisti, sive de pœnis impiorum, sive beatitudine sanctorum, ut credant hi quibus ego prædico vera esse quæ dico de regno et inferno,' p. 26. This story is given by Joscelin, cap. 80.

† This is the version of the story given by Joscelin, cap. 21.

who did so should be saved from punishments after death. "And some that passed the night there relate that they suffered the most grievous torments, by which they think themselves purged of their sins, and some of them call that place the Purgatory of St. Patrick."*

It appears from Joscelin's story, that even so late as the end of the twelfth century, the legend had hardly become fixed in the definite form which Henry of Saltrey's narrative was intended to give to it. There were other points of doubt on which opinions continued to differ till a much later period. Henry de Knyghton, in his history, asserts that it was the second Patrick, the abbot, and not the bishop, to whom the revelation of the purgatory was first made;† and the same assertion is made by John of Bromton, towards the end of the thirteenth century.‡ The difference of opinion on this subject probably arose from a misconstruction of the first words of Henry of Saltrey's narrative, which are: *Dicitur magnus sanctus Patricius, qui a primo est secundus*, &c.; but it shows that there was no authority for the legend older than, or in-

* 'In hujus igitur montis cacumine jejunare ac vigilare consuescunt plurimi, opinantes se postea nunquam intraturos portas inferni, quia hoc impetratum a Domino existimant meritis et precibus Sancti Patricii. Referunt etiam nonnulli qui pernoctaverant ibi, se tormenta gravissima fuisse perpessos, quibus se purgatos a peccatis putant, unde et quidam illorum illum Purgatorium Sancti Patricii vocant.' Joscelini Vita S. Patric. cap. 172.

† 'In diebus istius Stephani miles quidam Owynus nomine, intravit purgatorium Patricii secundi abbatis non episcopi.' Henry de Knyghton, col. 2390.

‡ 'Circa istud purgatorium Patricii est notandum, quod sanctus Patricius secundus, qui fuit abbas, et non episcopus, dum in Hibernia prædicaret, studuit animos hominum illorum bestiales terrore tor-

dependent of, the story of the descent of the knight Owain. There were other doubts regarding the origin ot this purgatory. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Alexander Neckham, (as quoted by Camden,) probably alluding to this place, calls it St. Brandan's Purgatory.

"Asserit esse locum solennis fama dicatum
Brendano, quo lux lucida sæpe micat.
Purgandas animas datur hic transire per ignes,
Ut dignæ facie judicis esse queant."

The mode in which this legend was made public is thus told in the Latin narrative. Gervase (the founder and first abbot of Louth, in Lincolnshire,) sent his monk Gilbert to the king, then in Ireland, to obtain a grant to build a monastery there. Gilbert, on his arrival, complained to the king, Henry II, that he did not understand the language of the country. The king said to him, "I will give you an excellent interpreter," (optimum interpretem tibi commendabo,) and sent him the knight Owain, who remained with him during the time he was occupied in building the monastery, and repeated to him frequently the story of his adventures in purgatory. Gilbert and his companions subsequently returned to England, and there he repeated the story, and some one said he thought it was all a dream, to which Gilbert answered, "that there were some who believed that those who entered the purgatory fell into a trance, and saw the vision in the spirit,* but that the knight had denied this, and declared that the whole was seen and felt really in the body. Both Gilbert,

mentorum,' &c. Jo. Bromton, col. 1076. He had already made the same assertion, col. 1043.

* 'Cui dixit Gilbertus, sunt quidam qui dicunt quod intrantes aulam primo sunt in extasi, et hæc omnia viderunt in spiritu.' MS. Cotton. Vespas. A. vi, fol. 150.

from whom Henry of Saltrey received the story, and the bishop of the diocese assured him that many perished in this purgatory, and were never heard of afterwards.

It is clear from the allusion to it in Cæsarius of Heisterbach, that already at the beginning of the thirteenth century, St. Patrick's purgatory had become famous throughout Europe. "If any one doubt of purgatory," says this writer, "let him go to Scotland [*i. e.* Ireland, to which this name was anciently given] and enter the purgatory of St. Patrick, and his doubts will be expelled."* This recommendation was frequently acted upon in that, and particularly in the following century, when pilgrims from all parts of Europe, some of them men of rank and wealth, repaired to this abode of superstition. On the patent rolls in the Tower of London, under the year 1358, we have an instance of testimonials given by the king (Edward III) on the same day, to two distinguished foreigners, one a noble Hungarian, the other a Lombard, Nicholas de Beccariis, of their having faithfully performed this pilgrimage.† And still later, in 1397, we

* 'Qui de purgatorio dubitat, Scotiam pergat, Purgatorium Sancti Patricii intret, et de purgatorii pœnis amplius non dubitabit.' Cæsar. Heisterbach. Dialog. de mirac. sui temporis, lib. xii, cap. 38.

† These testimonials are so curious that I shall reprint one from the 'Fœdera,' vol. iii, part i, p. 174: 'Rex universis et singulis ad quos præsentes literæ pervenerint salutem. Nobilis vir Malatesta Ungarus de Arminio miles, ad præsentiam nostram veniens mature nobis exposuit quod ipse nuper a terræ suæ descendens laribus, Purgatorium Sancti Patricii infra terram nostram Hiberniæ constitutum in multis corporis sui laboribus peregre visitaret, ac per integræ diei et noctis unius continuatum spatium, ut est moris, clausus manserat in eodem; nobis cum instantia supplicando ut in præmissorum veracius fulcimentum regales nostras literas inde sibi concedere dignaremur. Nos

find king Richard II granting a safe conduct to visit the same place to Raymond, viscount of Perilhos, knight of Rhodes, and chamberlain of the king of France, with twenty men and thirty horses.* Raymond de Perilhos, on his return to his native country, wrote a narrative of what he had seen, in the dialect of the Limousan (lemosina lingua), of which a Latin version was printed by O'Sullevan, in his 'Historia Catholica Iberniæ.' The viscount must have had some political object in publishing this tract, which is a mere compilation from the story of Henry of Saltrey, and begins like that with an account of the origin of the purgatory. He represents himself as having been first a minister of Charles V of France, and subsequently the intimate friend of John I of Arragon, after whose death (in 1395,) he was seized with the desire of knowing how he was treated in the other world, and determined, like a new Eneas, to go into Patrick's purgatory in search of him. He saw precisely the same sights as the knight Owain, but only twelve men came to him in the hall instead of fifteen; and in the fourth field of punishments he

autem ipsius peregrinationis considerantes periculosa discrimina, licet tanti nobilis in hac parte nobis assertio sit accepta, quia tamen tam dilecti et fidelis nostri Almarici de Sancto Amando militis, justiciarii nostri Hiberniæ, quam prioris et conventus loci dicti purgatorii, et etiam aliorum auctoritatis multæ virorum literis, aliisque claris evidentiis, informamur quod dictus nobilis peregrinationem suam hujusmodi rite perfecerat et etiam animose, dignum duximus sibi super hiis auctoritatis nostræ testimonium favorabiliter adhibere, et ut sublato cujuscunque dubitationis involucro, præmissorum veritas singulis lucidius pateſiat, has literas nostras sigillo regio consignatas sibi duximus concedendas. Dat. in Palatio nostro Westm. vicesimo quarto die Octobris.'

* Fœdera, vol. iii, part iv, p. 135.

saw king John of Arragon, and many others of his own friends and relations.*

In the fourteenth century St. Patrick's purgatory was introduced into a wild Italian romance, which was extremely popular in the fifteenth and earlier part of the sixteenth centuries.† The hero of this romance, Guerrino, called il Meschino, was the child of royal but unfortunate parents, and in his infancy had fallen into the hands of the Saracens. The scene is laid in the days of Charlemagne; Guerrino, as he grew up, became a brave and adventurous warrior, and after distinguishing himself in the wars of the eastern nations, he visited the land of Prester John, and wandered through the different countries of central Asia, attacking and killing many of the fabulous monsters with

* O'Sullevan, Historiæ Catholicæ Iberniæ Compendium, 4to, Lisbon, 1621, p. 14. O'Sullevan, by an evident error, places the date of this visit in 1328. Every historical allusion contained in it points out to the date of Richard the Second's safe conduct. At Dublin the viscount is introduced to the viceroy, Richard earl of March, who was, of course, Richard Plantagenet. The late M. Raynouard, a short time before his death, gave me a transcript of a manuscript narrative, in one of the dialects of the south of France, of the visit of a nobleman to St. Patrick's Purgatory about this period, which I have unfortunately mislaid; but I think that it was the original tract of Raymond de Perilhos.

† The romance of 'Guerrino detto il Meschino' is said to have been written in the fourteenth century, by a Florentine named Andrea Patria. It is probable that there were not less than a dozen editions printed before the year 1500, (some of them now of extreme rarity,) and it was frequently reprinted in the earlier part of the sixteenth century. A French translation was printed as early as 1490, and also went through several editions. It has been supposed that this romance was written originally in French, but, I think, without any substantial grounds for such a supposition.

which medieval geographers filled them. Learning from the "trees of the sun," that his parents were christians, he sets out in search of them, and reaching Italy pays a visit to the Sibyl, concerning whom this romance has preserved a singular legend. Having learnt from her that his parents were alive, he continues his search, and is sent by the pope to St. Patrick's purgatory. With the permission of the archbishop of Ireland, who gave him the keys of the purgatory, he repairs to the monastery, and enters the cave. He then proceeds by a long dark way to a fair meadow, with a church in the midst, where two venerable men in white garments come to him and tell him what he has to suffer, and teach him the prayer by which he will be saved from each successive danger. Then a party of devils arrive, who drag him away, and he is successively carried to the different places in which were punished the idle, envious, proud, gluttonous, luxurious, avaricious, &c. In the course of his adventures he sees many persons who had made a figure in the world, and with whom he had had transactions. He is allowed also to visit hell, which he finds divided into circles, and in the seventh he sees Judas, Nero, and Mahomet. The whole is, in fact, a palpable and poor imitation of Dante, built upon the legend of Henry of Saltrey. On leaving hell, he crosses a bridge, which leads him to paradise, where he meets Enoch and Helias, who act as his guides, and in the end he obtains satisfactory information respecting his parents.

It appears that at this period the reality of the vision supposed to be seen by those who had the courage to enter the dreadful cavern had become a question, if not of general doubt, yet of frequent discussion. Froissart

gives the following curious account (which I repeat in the quaint phraseology of his ancient translator, Lord Berners,) of a conversation with Sir William Lisle on this subject, as they rode together on the way from Ospring to Leedes, in Kent. "Than on the Friday in the mornynge," says the knightly chronicler, "sir Wyllyam Lysle and I rode together, and on the waye I demaunded of him, if he had bene with the kynge in the voyage into Irelande. He answered me, yes. Than I demaunded of him the maner of the hole that is in Ireland, called saynte Patrykes purgatorye, if it were trewe that was sayde of it or not. Than he sayde, that of a suretye suche a hole there was, and that he him selfe and another knight of Englande hadde ben there while the kinge laye at Duvelyn, and sayde, howe they entred into the hole and were closed in at the sonne goynge downe, and abode there all night, and the nexte mornyng issued out agayne at the son risyng. Than I demaunded if he had any suche strange sightes or visions as was spoken of. Than he said howe that whan he and his felow were entred and past the gate that was called the purgatory of saynt Patrike, and that they were descended and gone downe thre or foure partes discendynge downe as into a cellar, a certayne hoote vapure rose agayne them and strake só into their heedes, that they were fayne to syt downe on the stares, which are of stone. And after they had sytte there a season, they had great desyre to slepe, and so fell aslepe, and slepet there all nyght. Than I demaunded if that in theyr slepe they knewe where they were, or what vysyons they had: he answered me, that in slepyng they entred into great ymaginacyons and in marveylous dremes, otherwise than they were wonte to have in their chambres, and in the mornynge they

issued out, and, wythin a shorte season, clene forgate their dremes and visyons, wherfore he sayde, he thought all that mater was but a fantasy. Than I left speakyng any further of that mater, bycause I wolde fayne have knowen of him what was done in the voyage in Ireland."*

The hot vapour mentioned by Froissart was, no doubt, one of the principal agents in this pious fraud; and the tedious ceremonies observed before entry were designed and well calculated to produce an impression on the sensatory organs, which would be followed by extraordinary dreams and imaginary visions.

At the beginning of the fifteenth century St. Patrick's Purgatory was made the subject of a vision, which has more originality than any of those of the century preceding. Its object was evidently to throw into discredit the extravagant fashions in dress then prevalent, and other vices of the time. The writer, named William Staunton, tells us that in 1409 he was placed in the cave with all due ceremonies.† "Y, William Staunton, born in the bisshopryche of Dereham, of Englond, bi Goddes grace entred into the purgatorie of seint Patrik, in the bisshopriche of Cleghire, in Irlande, the .viij. owre[1] bifore the none, on the Friday next after Holyrode day in harvest. I was put in by the

[1] hour

* Froissart, by Lord Berners, ed. Pynson, 1525, fol. cc.xlxij.

† A copy of this vision is found in a manuscript in the British Museum, written in 1451, MS. Reg. 17 B. xliii, fol. 133. "Here begynneth the revelacion the which William Staunton saw in Patrikis Purgatorie, the Friday next after the fest of the exaltacion of the crosse, in the yere of owre Lorde m[l]. cccc[mo]. ix."

prior of seint Mathew of the same purgatorie, with precessionⁱ and devougte prayers of the same priour, and the coventᵃ tokeᵃ me an orisonᵃ to blesse me with, and to write the first worde in [my] forehede, the which prayer is this, *Jhesu Christe, fili Dei vivi, miserere mihi peccatori.* And the priour taught me to say this prayer when ony sprit,ᵃ good or evel, appered unto me, or when y herd ony noyse that y shuld be afered of, if thei were good sprites or evel." When William was left in the cave he fell asleep. (fol. 133, v°.) "And there y abode, and sumwhat slumbered and slepte. And after y was wareᵃ of a litel light afer, as it had be the daynᵍ of the day. And me thought y sawe a man and a woman, bothe cladde in white, the man in a chanons is abite,ᵃ and the woman in the same abite, with a vayle on hir hede, as a nonne.ᵃ An when y saw hem first, y dredyng sumwhat, said my prayer and marked my forhede as the priour taught me. Than they laughed, and said 'God spede!' And than y was sumwhat rejoysed, and y said, 'The spede of God be welcome unto me.' And that man said unto me, 'William, thow art welcome; and thow hast take on hond a grete thyng, but bi the mercy of God thow shalt wel do and wel fare: and here fast by thow shalt fynde .ij. waies, one on thi righond,ᵃ another on thi lefte honde. The way on thi right hond is faire and brode, and the way in thi lifte hond is moreᵃ and sumdelᵃ fowle in the bigynneng, and it is faire and clene to sight; but leve the way on the left hond, and take the wai on the right hond. But thow shalt fynd men in thi right hond, the which shul

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ⁱ procession
ᵃ convent
ᵃ gave
ᵃ prayer
ᵃ spirit
ᵃ aware
ᵍ dawning
ᵃ habit
ᵃ nun
ᵃ right hand
ᵃ larger
ᵃ somewhat

lete[1] the to passe by here power,[2] the which men shullen be liche[3] in shape and colour to men of thi owne contree that ben levyng,[4] but thei ben evel spirites, of which thow shalt be evel aferd, and therfore have thow in thi mynde the passioun of owre Lord Jhesu Crist, and sai thi praier, and thei shul voide, and be knowe to the such as thei be; and afterward thou shalt see and here more grisly[5] sightes and evel spirites, of the which thou shalt be sore adradde, but have in mynd, as y said the, of owre Lordes passioun, and thai shal do the none harm.' Thanne y, William, said, 'If it myght be plesyng to God and to the for to have knowlage of the, that so moche kindenesse have shewid to me, and y require the for the love of owre Lord Jhesu Criste, if it be thi wil?' Thanne he saide, 'Y wil gladly that thow wete, I am cleped in Northcontree Johan of Bridlyngtone, and so y am; and this woman is seint Ive, my suster, that woned[6] in Quitike.'" It appears that William had made acceptable offerings to these two saints.

The saints having left him, William proceeded on his way, according to their directions, and met with the people of whom St. John of Bridlington had warned him, who represented themselves as his friends, and would have persuaded him from going forward, telling him that they were sent by God to show him the right way. But he said his prayer, and marked his forehead with the cross, and they vanished. (fol. 134, v°.)

"And than appered to me evel spirites; but tho[7] y was more sekerer[8] than y was before, for tho wist[9] y wel that

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[1] hinder
[2] with their might, *i. e.* as far as they are able
[3] like
[4] are living
[5] fearful, terrific
[6] dwelt
[7] then
[8] more secure, more confident
[9] then knew

my praier was of vertu.[1] And than I went forthe that way, and sone ther appered to me many fereful and horrible spirites, of the which y was moche afered, and dred. And summe of tho[2] spirites had .iiij. visages, summe with .vij. hornes, and summe with .v.; summe had a visage in every elbowe, summe on every kne; and thei maden to me an hudious[3] noyse with creyes and with bleryng owt of here brennyng tonges, and other many noyses mo[4] than I can telle, for I was so aferd that y hadde no mynde on God ne on my praier, ne on none other thinge that shuld me help, but only on that noyse, and so y was neghe[5] in point of perishyng. Then cam that blisful virgyn seint Ive, and seid to me, 'Thou madman, have mynde in thi hert of the passioun of owre Lord Jhesu Crist, Goddes sone of hevene, and mark the with thi praier.' . . . And tho y markid me with my praier, and al the evel spirites vaneshid fro my sight." Then he went on without meeting anything for about a mile, when he met with St. John and St. Ive again, (fol. 135;) "and a suster of myne, that was dede long to-fore[6] in a pestilence tyme, and anothir man which I knewe welle that my suster loved wel whiles thei leved in this world. And than I honowred seint Johan and seint Ive; and seint Johan seid to me than, 'Thow were evel agast of other spirites.' And I said, 'So y was; blessid be God and owre ladi that y am comen to yow ageyn!' Than he saide, 'Thou haddest evelle mynde on the passioun of owre Lord Jhesu Crist, and on thi praier, for thow art not stedefast on thi beleve,[7] and also to simpelle[8] to make

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[1] virtue, efficacy, power
[2] those
[3] hideous
[4] more
[5] nigh, near
[6] before
[7] belief
[8] too simple

such a viage on honde, savyng only the merci of God.' And whan he had thus said to me, my suster spake, and said, 'Holy, ye be here in Goddis stede, and y make my complaint to yow on my brother that here stondeth, that he hath synned in holychirch agen God; for this man that stondeth here loved me, and y loved him, and ether of us wold have had other in the law of God, as holy chirch techeth, and shuld have geten on me .iij. sowles to God; and my brother lettid[1] us to go togeder, ffor he said, and we didden[2] we shuld nothir[3] have joye of other, and for that cause we lefte hit.' Tho seint Johan said, 'Whi diddest thou this trespas agen God and thi owne sowle? ffor y tel the ther nis no man that letteth man or woman to go togeder in the bond of God, thow the man be a sheperd, and alle his auncestres, and the woman be comyn of kingis or of emperours; or if the man be comyn of never so high kynne, and the woman of never so lowe kynne, if thei love other otheir,[4] he synneth in holy chirche agenst God and his cristendome in dede, in that he letteth hem, who ever he be, and therfore shall have moche payn and tribulacion.'"

After being assoyled of this crying sin, (fol. 136,) "seint Johan said to me, 'William, seist thou the yender fier fer fro the.' And y said, 'Y se yender a smoke, that is like a fire to be there.' And seint Johan said tho, 'Yender is a grete fire and styngkyng, and certeyn were it possible that all the people in the world, men, women, and children, felden the smych[5] of yender fire, thei shuld not endure so long with hire lifes as a man shuld turne his honde up and downe; therfore go we

[1] hindered [2] if we did [3] neither
[4] other other, *i. e.* if one love the other [5] felt the smudge

bitwene the fire and the wynde, and loke wel what thou seist[1] theryn.' And than I went so nygh that y myght know what maner of paynes were theryn; and there y saw thilk[2] fire brynneng[3] diverse men and women, and summe that I knew when thei levid in the world. As it appered there to my sight, I saw summe there with colers[4] of gold abowte here neckis, and sum of silver, and summe men y saw with gay girdels of silver and gold, and harneist hornes abowte here neckes, summe with mo jagges on here clothis than hole cloth, sum hire clothis ful of gyngeles and belles of silver al over sette, and summe with long pokes on hire sleves; and women with gownes trayleng bihinde hem a moche[5] space, and summe other with gay clapelets on hir hedes of gold and perles and other precious stones.* And than I loked on him that y saw first in payn, and saw the colers and the gay girdels and bawderikes brennyng, and the fendes draying[6] hem bi .ij. fingermete and more withthynne here flessh al brynneng as fire; and y saw the jagges that men were clothed ynne turne al to addres, to dragons, and to todes, and many other orrible bestes, sowking[7] hem, and bityng hem, and styngyng hem with al here myght, and thorowout every gyngels I saw fendes smyte brennyng nayles of fire into here flessh. I also saw fends drawyng down the skynne of

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[1] seest [2] that [3] burning [4] collars [5] great [6] dragging (?) [7] sucking

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* This is a curious and exact picture of the fashions of the time, and may be compared with Chaucer's Persones Tale, and with other contemporary writers.

here shulders like to pokes, and kittyng hem of, and drawyng hem to the hedes of whom thai cut them fro, al brynnyng as fire. And tho I saw the women that had side trayles byhinde hem, and tho side trayles cut of with fendes, and y-brent[1] on here hedes; and summe toke of the cuttyng alle brennyng and stopped therwith here mowthis, hire noses, and hire eres. I saw also hire gay chapeletes of gold, of perlous,[2] and other precious stones, y-turned into nailes of yren, brennyng, and fendes with brennyng hamers smytyng hem into hire hedes." These St. John told him were proud and vain people, and such as delighted in extravagant apparel.

Then St. John led him to another fire, where the fiends were putting out people's eyes and pouring molten brass and lead in the sockets, and in wounds which they made in their flesh, and tearing off their arms, and the nails of their feet and hands, and soldering them on again with their molten metals. (fol. 137, v°.) "And than seint Johan said, 'These ben thei that sweren bi Goddes membres, as bi his yen[3], bi his armes, bi his woundes, bi his nayles and other his membris, and thei thus dismembrid God in horrible swerynge bi his lymmes.'" In the third fire were the breakers of holydays, who stuffed and crammed themselves with good things on these days on earth, and were now crammed with filth and fire. In the fourth fire were those who did not honour their parents, who were here subjected to the most offensive dishonours and contempt. In the fifth fire were thieves and robbers, who, besides the peculiar punishments allotted to themselves, were com-

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[1] burnt [2] pearls [3] eyes

pelled to suffer also part of the pains of those whom they had robbed, which latter stood by the while and looked on. In the sixth fire were those who for hire had borne false witness against others, and all the goods or possessions they had gained by such dishonest proceedings were burning, and ever and anon falling upon them, and those whom they had injured were standing by enjoying the sight. In the seventh fire were murderers, whom the fiends were continually cutting to pieces with red hot knives and swords, and putting together again. In the eighth fire were luxurious people, and those who had led their life in incontinence; they were hung by the offending members, or by their tongues, eyes, &c., and in that posture beaten by their tormentors. In the ninth fire were those who had neglected to chastise their children, who now, themselves tormented, were continually increasing the torment of their parents by beating them with brands of fire. Next William came to the place of punishment for backbiters, who were bound down on the top of a rock, where they were subjected to the stench of all the fires, and the devils constantly tearing their backs. Then St. John led him (fol. 140, v°.) to "twey towers, that on ful of brynnyng fire, and the other ful of yse and snowe; and in that fulle of fire y saw many sowles y-payned and made hote in poynte for to mylt, and sodenly with fendes thei were cast owt of that passyng hete into that other tower ful of yse and snowe, and fendes with shovelis castyng yse and snow uppon hem, and that payned hem fulle sore; and thanne y saw many sowles with firebrondys brennyng in here hondes, havyng here bodies ful of serpents, snakes, todes, and divers other orrible wormes,

knockyng at the yate[1] of the towre; and when thei were letyn yn, thei cast the brondes of fire to thilk[2] other sowles that were cast yn paynes, and beten hem with the same brondis[3] and payned them wonderly sore. And al the serpentes, todes, and other orrible wormes lopen[4] from here bodies to thilk other that were payned in that cold, and stongyn and beten hem wonderly sore." These were bishops who had been proud and overbearing, and had not set a good example to their flocks, and their persecutors were their proud servants; "and thilk serpentes, snakes, todes, and other wormes, ben here jaggis and daggis."[5] Next he came to a fire where ecclesiastics, who had had too much of the goods of the church, and had not lived in continence and abstinence, were in terrible torments; and then to another for parsons, vicars, and priests, who had neglected their duty and been occupied in "hakyng[6] or huntyng," or other worldly enjoyments. (fol. 142.) Next was a great house, in which were tormented "the sowles of men of holychirch, as persones, vicaries, and other prestes, that shuld have tawght good doctrine, and good exemple have yevyn to the comen people, ffor thei did noght so." They had no charity, and would not clothe the naked, though they had many suits of clothes, new and old, laying by and never used; the moths that bred in these were now worms, to torment them. And those who had let their churches fall into decay, so that rain and

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[1] gate
[2] those
[3] brands, rods
[4] leaped
[5] jaggs and daggs were the names given to a fashion of ornamental cutting the edges of the cloaks and other garments at this time, which involved a great waste of material
[6] hawking

hail fell into the chancel and on the very altars, were punished there by showers of terrible hail and rain.

(Fol. 144.) "And when Seint Johan had shewid me al these paynes, and many mo than y can or may telle or bithinke,[1] y said to him, 'May ther be ony remedi or mytigacion to these sowles that be thus y-payned in these divers paynes?' and he said thus: 'William, God forbede it els! for thow shalt understond that these sowles may be holpen[2] owt of these paynes principallich bi the mercy of God, and by the good dedis that here frendes and the people levyng in the world may do for hem, as to lernyd men as bi masses singyng, saing of sawters, *placebo*, and *dirige*, commendacions, .vij. psalmes, and the .xv. psalmes, with the letenye, bi almesdede and bi pilgrimage; and also bi lewidmen with the *pater noster*, the *ave Maria*, and the crede, almesdede, fastyng, and pilgrimage, and bi many other good dedis.'" St. John now left him: "and thanne y was mochel adred when he was gone fro me, and forth y yede[3] bi the water side, the which water was greislych[4] and depe, and moche greisly[4] noise y herd therynne, and understode that there shulde have ben a brigge[5] over that water, as y had herd say in the world; and y saw none, and was the more agast and adrede. Thanne y herd a more grislich noyse of fendys comyng bihind me than ever I herd bifore." And so he forgot his prayer again, and St. Ive was obliged to come to his aid, and the 'fendes' left him. (Fol. 145.) "And y went forth bi the water side on my right honde, and on that other side of the water y saw nothing but an high roche,[6] and so long y went on that

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[1] remember
[2] helped
[3] went
[4] fearful
[5] bridge
[6] rock

water side that y saw an high towour on the ferther side of that water, and there y saw mo light than y did on al the way bifore. On the top of the towre y saw a fayre woman stondyng:" and he prayed, and found a ladder placed against the tower; "and hit was so litille, as me thowght that it wold onnethe[1] bere ony thing; and the first rong[2] of the ladder was so that onnethe might my fynger reche therto, and that rong was sharper than ony rasor, as me thowt, and anone I drow my hond therfro.[3] And than I herd a grisly[4] noyse comyng fast toward me, and y markid me with my praier, and al that noyse vanyshid away, and than y lokid to that ladder, and there y saw a corde comyng fro the top of the towre to the fote of the ladder, and that woman bad me knitte that corde abowte my myddelle, and so y did, and yede to that ladder agen, and reght[5] my hond to that rong, and tho y feld[6] the rong of no sharpnesse, and bi the help of that woman and of myne owne gryppyng y steied[7] uppon that ladder, and tho y herd a thowsand noyse more grisly and hidewus in the water under me, and in that lond that y com fro, than y herd ony tyme bifore. Than bi the help of owre Lord Jhesu Crist and his merci, and that woman that was above that towour, y was sone brought to the top of that towour, where y was passid al maner of drede." The cord, she told him, was one which he had once given in charity to a person who asked alms for the love of God. He was now in a country surpassingly fair and beautiful, and was met by a company of monks, 'chanons,' and priests, and a bishop

[1] hardly
[2] the cross bar of a ladder, on which the foot is placed
[3] therefrom, from it
[4] fearful
[5] raught, thrust
[6] felt
[7] mounted

came to him and blessed him, and welcomed him, and talked with him, and gave him good counsel for the remainder of his life. William was unwilling to quit this happy place, but he was told that it was necessary for him to return to the world, and pass there the remainder of his earthly life.

CHAPTER VIII.

The pope orders St. Patrick's Purgatory to be destroyed; its restoration—Calderon's play of the 'Purgatorio de San Patricio'—Vision of Louis Enius—Modern history of St. Patrick's Purgatory—Removal of the site—Proclamations against the pilgrimage in 1632, and by Queen Anne—Modern superstitions.

At the end of the fifteenth century, the Purgatory of St. Patrick fell into disgrace. The numerous copies of the legend first published by Henry of Saltrey, which were distributed by the invention of printing, tended much to increase its celebrity at this period. A monk of Eymstadt, in Holland, who proved either more conscientious or less credulous than former visitors, undertook the pilgrimage to Lough Derg. When he arrived at the lake, he applied for entrance to the prior, who referred him to the bishop of the diocese, without whose license no visitors were received. The monk then repaired to the residence of the bishop, but, as he was "poor and moneyless," the servants refused to admit him into their master's presence. Having, however, with difficulty obtained an audience, he fell in a supplicating posture before the prelate, and begged permission to enter St. Patrick's Purgatory. The bishop demanded a certain sum of money, which, he said, was due to him

from every pilgrim who came on this errand.* The monk represented his poverty, and, after much urgent solicitation, the bishop grudgingly gave him the necessary license. He then went to the prior, performed the usual ceremonies, and was shut up in the cavern. There he remained all night, trembling with fear, and in constant expectation of a visit from the demons; but when the prior let him out next morning, he had had no vision of any kind, and, dissatisfied with the result of his pilgrimage, he hastened to Rome, where he made his complaint to pope Alexander VI. The pope acknowledged himself convinced of the imposture, and sent orders for the destruction of the Purgatory, which were put in effect with great solemnity on St. Patrick's day, 1497.

It was not long before the place recovered its ancient reputation. The office of St. Patrick, inserted in the Roman missals in 1522, was almost entirely devoted to the celebration of the purgatory; and, although this office was rejected two years after,† the fame of St. Patrick's Purgatory continued to increase, and the legend was generally adopted by the Romish theologians. During upwards

* "Adiit episcopum: et quoniam pauper erat et sine pecunia, vix a ministris admissus est: provolutusque genibus episcopi petiit sibi licentiam dari intrandi purgatorium S. Patricii. Episcopus vero petiit summam quandam pecuniæ, quam ab intrantibus jure sibi deberi dicebat." Acta Sanctorum Martii, vol. ii, p. 590.

† In the old office of St. Patrick, printed by Colgan, the only allusion to the purgatory is contained in the following lines:

"Hic est doctor benevolus
Hibernicorum apostolus,
Cui loca purgatoria
Ostendit Dei gratia."

of two centuries its reputation continued to spread through France, Italy, and Spain.

In the latter country, about the middle of the seventeenth century, the poet Calderon made St. Patrick's Purgatory the subject of one of his religious dramas. At the opening of this piece appears Egerio, king of Ireland, "clothed with skins and very furious," (vestido de pieles, muy furioso,) attended by his two daughters. Patrick and a newly-converted Christian, named Ludovico Enio, are shipwrecked on the Irish coast, and appear before the impious king. Patrick tells the king his life, and preaches to him the gospel of his Redeemer; but the king answers him with scoffs. Ludovico Enio, when questioned by the impious monarch, informs him that he also was a native of Ireland, from whence he had removed, while young, to Perpignan, where he had indulged in every species of vice and crime. He had subsequently entered the service of the king of France, and had been employed in his wars with the king of England. He soon returned to his old career of crime, and having seduced a nun to rob the treasury of her monastery and elope with him, he fled to Valencia, where eventually he had sought support in his vicious life by the prostitution of his mistress. This wretch had been converted to Christianity, and was now returned a penitent to his native land. One of the king's daughters falls in love with him, and is converted. In the course of the drama St. Patrick, horrified with the blasphemies of king Egerio, prays for a divine manifestation to convert his deluded countrymen, and two angels reveal to him the fearful cavern. The mouth of the cavern is exhibited on the stage: it is to be "the most horrible that can be contrived, and within it an aperture in the stage." The

impious king is made to enter; but, instead of passing into purgatory, he falls through the aperture into the pit of hell: "He sinks in with much noise, and flames rise from below, and great cries are heard."* The fate of king Egerio also converts his people; and subsequently Ludovico Enio enters the cave, but with better fortune. On his return he relates to the auditors what he had seen: it is but an abridgment of the old legend. On first emerging from darkness he came to the hall, where he was visited by the twelve venerable men in white garments, and whence he was carried by the demons, and dragged through the different regions of purgatory to the borders of the infernal regions. There he came to "a river, which had flowers of fire on its bank, and its current was of sulphur; in it were marine monsters, hydras and serpents; it was very broad, and over it was a bridge as narrow as a line, and it was so slender and weak, that it did not appear to me possible to pass without breaking it."

" Y la que mas propriamente
Llaman infierno, que fue
Llevarme á un rio, que tiene
Flores de fuego en su márgen,
Y de azufre es su corriente;
Monstruos marinos en él
Eran hidras y serpientes;
Era muy ancho, y tenia
Una tan estrecha puente,
Que era una linea no mas,

* "Aqui se ha descubierto la boca de una cueva, lo mas horrible que se pueda imitar, y dentro della está un escotillon, y en poniéndose en él Egerio, se hunde con mucho ruido, y suben llamas de abajo, oyéndose muchas voces." Stage direction.

Y ella tan delgada y débil,
Que á mí no me pareció,
Que, sin quebrarla, pudiese
Pasarla."

He, however, reached the other side, and arrived at paradise, where everything was beautiful and joyful. And in face of him he perceived a lofty city, with towers and pinnacles; "the gates were of gold, studded tastily with diamonds, emeralds, topazes, rubies," and other precious stones.

"Y á la vista descubrí
Una ciudad eminente,
De quien era el sol remate
A torres y chapiteles.
Las puertas eran de oro,
Tachonadas sútilmente
De diamantes, esmeraldas,
Topacios, rubíes, claveques."

The procession of saints then came out to meet him, as in the legend of Owain. Ludovico rather ridiculously ends by reciting a confused list of authorities—many of them of comparatively modern date—in proof of the truth of the legend of St. Patrick's Purgatory.

Among the curious collection of Spanish printed ballads in the British Museum, there is one entitled 'The Cave of St. Patrick,' (La Cueva de San Patricio,) printed at Madrid as late as 1764, to be hawked about the streets for sale, as the broadside ballads used to be sold in England. It is nothing more than the relation of Ludovico Enio, taken verbally from the play of Calderon. But we find a still more singular use made of the dramatic personage in France, about the same period, in a little popular volume, printed at Rouen, entitled 'Histoire de la Vie et du Pur-

gatoire de St. Patrice, archevesque et primat d'Hibernie, avec plusieurs Oraisons; mises en François par le R. P. François Bouillon, de l'Ordre de S. François, et Bachelier en Théologie.' This little volume appears to have been widely circulated during at least half a century; the first censorial approbation attached to it is dated in 1701, while another bears date 1742. It consists, first, of a life of St. Patrick, in which all the most grossly superstitious parts of the old legends relating to the saint are collected together. This is followed by an account of the state of souls after death, and more particularly, of purgatory, in which the writer tells us, among many other similar stories, that "at the instant the soul is separated from the body it is carried to one of the four following places: either to heaven, to enjoy the glory of the happy, if it be found in a state of grace; or to the flames of purgatory, if it has not made full satisfaction to divine justice for the faults it has committed in this world; or to the limbus of little children, if it has not been washed with the holy baptismal waters; or, lastly, into the infernal fires, if it be found criminal before the tribunal of divine justice. This visible world which we inhabit is full and round like a sphere or ball, with no part empty; the air itself is filled with bodies, although they do not appear to our eyes, as appears by the sound which touches our ears. . . . The lowest place of the world is the centre of the earth, which is an indivisible point in the middle of its breast, and in this imaginary point is the abyss of hell; and the empyreal heaven, where is the dwelling-place of the Divinity, and the dwelling of the saints, is at the highest part of this round machine. . . . . Purgatory is between heaven and hell, although distant from the one and near to the other; for, so to speak,

it is neighbouring to and bordering upon those places of darkness; yet it is between the two extremities. The limbus of little children is also not very far distant. A little higher there is the bosom of Abraham, where were retired the souls of the holy patriarchs and prophets, and all those who died in a state of grace in the time of the natural and written laws, until the arrival of the Messiah in the world, who was to transport them all to heaven, to take possession of the glory which he had purchased for them by his blood and by his death." The worthy writer then gives the history and discription of St. Patrick's Purgatory, and of the ceremonies observed there, and the visions seen, in the truth of every particle of which he avows his entire belief, and supports it by the testimony of the same confused list of authors (in general falsely quoted,) which had previously been repeated on the stage in the play of Calderon. The latter half of the book is occupied with 'The Veritable Relation of the History of Louis Enius,' (La Relation véritable de l'Histoire de Louis Enius.)

The story of Calderon's dramatic personage is here spun out to nearly seventy pages, with a multitude of additional incidents, and the whole is avowed to be a true history which had occurred in modern times. Louis Enius, while an infant, quits his native country (Ireland) with his parents to settle at Toulouse, where he is left an orphan with great fortune, which he squanders away in vice. To support himself in his extravagances he becomes a bandit, and commits murder, theft, and every kind of violence. In order to escape justice he enters the army, and gains promotion and a certain degree of impunity in his evil practices by his bravery; but being at last obliged to fly

again from the pursuits of justice, he finds shelter in a nunnery at Perpignan, where he seduces a nun (who was his cousin,) robs the monastery, and flies with his accomplice to Spain. His course of vice in the sequel follows very nearly the story of his prototype in Calderon, till he is converted from his evil courses by an extraordinary vision, and finally goes to expiate his evil life in a visit to St. Patrick's Purgatory. The description of what he saw there follows in a long narrative, pretended to have been written by Louis Enius himself, after his return. It is only the old stories of Henry of Saltrey and Raymond de Perilhos newly cooked up.

I have described this book chiefly to show the kind of religious information which was spread among the lower and middle classes of society in France by the Catholics, as late as the last century. Two "doctors in theology of the faculty of Paris," sign their names to an "approbation," dated in 1742; in which they declare that they have read through this mass of absurdity and falsehood, and that they have found "nothing in it contrary to the faith or to morality," (dans lequel nous n'avons rien trouvé de contraire à la Foi et aux bonnes moeurs). It was, indeed, not more than two or three years after the date just mentioned, that pope Benedict XIV preached and published at Rome a sermon in favour of St. Patrick's Purgatory. By such doctrines and representations the popish system kept its hold on the minds of the simple and ignorant people; and the same policy which led the Catholic priesthood to continue them in this condition and to perpetuate their influence, made them oppose and persecute men of science, such as Galileo, who were labouring to enlighten the world, and whose experiments and discoveries naturally tended to dispel the cloud of superstitious legend.

At home, however, this superstition met with a different treatment, although the blind zeal of the Irish priesthood rendered futile all attempts to destroy it. It appears, that when the pilgrimage was revived, the catholics invented several stories to account for its destruction by order of the pope. Some said that the miraculous vision had been discontinued because the people of Ireland had become so orthodox and so virtuous, that there was no further need of any extraordinary means to deter them from vice; but that when the heretics began to gain ground, after the separation of the English church from Rome, the miracle was providentially revived, in order to be made a means of convincing the new unbelievers.* Others said that the pope had only ordered one part of the cave to be demolished. There were some again, who said that the reason of its demolition was that it had been discovered not to be the real place of the Purgatory of St. Patrick, described in the ancient legends. The annals of Ulster, under the year 1497, as quoted in Richardson's 'Folly of Pilgrimages in Ireland,' states that "the cave of St. Patrick's Purgatory, in Lough Derg, was demolished in that year, on St. Patrick's Day, by the guardian of Donegaul, and some persons in the deanery of Logh Dirn, deputed by the bishop, by authority of the pope. Every one, understanding from the 'History of the Knight' and other ancient books, that this was not the purgatory which Patrick had from God, though every one resorted to it." It was perhaps on this pretence that the site of the purgatory was, as it is said, moved to another island in the lake, at a subsequent period, but it does not appear to be known exactly at what period this removal was effected. In another respect, the character of the

* Acta Sanctorum Martii, tom. ii, p. 590.

initiation was entirely changed: it had formerly been the custom to admit people rarely, and with great difficulty, but after its restoration the pilgrims were admitted in crowds, and the fee, instead of being paid to the bishop, was given to the guardian of the place. The original island of the purgatory, on this change, was found to be too near the shore; and to hinder the possibility of pilgrims entering by stealth, the site was moved to a smaller island at a greater distance. The writer whose work has just been mentioned, the Rev. John Richardson, gives the following account of the visit of a pious adventurer in the last century, who began to make excavations in the larger island, among the ruins of the old priory, in the hopes of finding the entrance to the original cavern. "It is said that the passages into purgatory was first found in this island; but it being near the shore, and a bridge from the main land into it, which gave the people free and ready access, this passage into purgatory was stopped up and another opened in a less island, about half a mile from the shore, by which means the monks wisely gained two points, viz., the profit of a ferry-boat for wafting the pilgrims over the lake, and an opportunity of working further upon the imaginations of the people, and making them believe that they were really going into another world. It is now [in 1727] said that this passage is hid from them for unknown reasons, but that in due time it will be discovered by some devout pilgrim. This probably induced one Ludovicus Pyrrhus, a native of Bretagne, in France, to try if he could find it out. In order to this, about thirty-four years ago, he came to Lough-Derg, and employed labourers to dig and search for it throughout both these islands, the neighbouring priests giving their assistance. He continued

two summers at this work, and after he had spent almost all the money he brought with him, fell a trafficking, and applied the profit to the same use. At last, as he was searching among the rubbish of a dwelling-house, in the largest island, he found a window with iron stanches; Mr. Art Mac Cullen, popish priest of the parish, Mr. Mark Mac Grath, and Mr. James Maxwell, a protestant, who gave me this account of Pyrrhus, being present. There happened to be a dark cavity under the window, which made the purgatory-mongers at first sight believe that it was the mouth of the passage; and therefore they cried for holy water to keep the spirits from breaking out of prison; and the priest immediately left the island in a great fright, as he pretended, and reported among the common people that the way into purgatory was found out for certain, that he saw it himself, and that it smelt strongly of brimstone. The rest of the papists who stayed behind were in a great consternation: but Mr. Maxwell, not being so credulous, desired them to have a little patience, and they would soon be convinced of their error; which accordingly fell out; for after digging a little deeper they found it was a cellar-window; whereupon Ludovicus Pyrrhus ceased from searching any more, and returned to his native country."

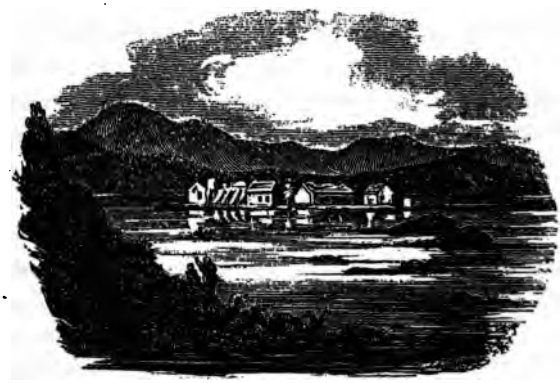
We know that as early as the reign of Elizabeth, large troops of pilgrims went to this pretended purgatory, so that from time to time it appears to have become an object of jealousy to the government. On the 13th of September, 1632, the lords justices of Ireland ordered the purgatory to be utterly broken down, defaced, and demolished; and prohibited any convent to be kept there for the time to come, or any person to go into the said

island on a superstitious account. In the second year of the reign of Queen Anne, St. Patrick's Purgatory had again become obnoxious to government; and an act of parliament was passed to prohibit the resort to it, in which it was provided, that "Whereas, the superstitions of popery are greatly increased and upheld by the pretended sanctity of places, especially of a place called St. Patrick's Purgatory, in the county of Donegaul, and of wells, to which pilgrimages are made by vast numbers at certain seasons, by which, not only the peace of the public is greatly disturbed, but the safety of the government also hazarded by the riotous and unlawful assembling together of many thousands of papists to the said wells and other places: be it further enacted, that all such meetings and assemblies shall be deemed and adjudged riots and unlawful assemblies, and punishable as such, in all or any persons meeting at such places as is aforesaid. And all sheriffs, justices of the peace, and other magistrates, are hereby required to be diligent in putting the laws in force against all offenders in the above particulars in due execution."

An account of the ceremonies observed at the initiation of St. Patrick's Purgatory in the fifteenth century, will be found in Colgan, and in the 'Acta Sanctorum' of the Bollandists. These ceremonies are described as they existed in the seventeenth century, in the 'Treatise of Patrick's Purgatory,' published by Dr. Jones, bishop of Clogher, in 1647; and, as they were continued in practice in the earlier part of the last century, in a work already cited, entitled 'The Great Folly, Superstition, and Idolatry of Pilgrimages in Ireland; especially of that to St. Patrick's Purgatory,' published in 1727 by John Richardson, rector of the parish of Belturbet, *alias* Annah.

The best account of the modern superstitious practices observed in the pilgrimage to this far-famed spot is given by Carleton, in his 'Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry.' It is not my object in the present essay to enter into the details of the modern observances. They appear to have no resemblance to the ancient ceremonies described in the tract of Henry of Saltrey; the initiated sees no vision; he is only subjected to a series of degrading and demoralizing sufferings, the object of which is to keep the Irish peasantry in ignorant subjection to the Catholic priesthood. It is a disgrace to the Catholic church that such a gross superstition has not been long suppressed. It is said that, at the present day, the number of pilgrims is so great during the summer months, that it is not uncommon to see as many as nine hundred or a thousand on the island at once. "It is the head of the church of Rome," observes Mr. Barrow, in his 'Tour round Ireland,' "who ought to use his influence to abate a nuisance of this kind, which confers no honour on the Catholic religion; and, I believe, is not in accordance with the Catholic ritual, but one of the mere tricks of monkish priests to fatten on the credulity of the lowest, the most distressed, and most ignorant, of the Catholic population. But what is to be said of the proprietor who raises a revenue of £200 or £300 a year by renting this spot? Does he never consider, when he looks upon the wretched objects that flock to this place from the extreme points of the island, what pain and misery they undergo on their long journey; what sufferings they entail on their starving families at home? How many of them actually perish on the journey? If he does, I should think the income he derives from such a source cannot afford him much grati-

fication." To the kindness of the gentleman last quoted, I am indebted for the use of the subjoined engraving, exhibiting the purgatory island as seen from the border of the lake; it was diminished from a drawing by Lieutenant Beechey, made in 1835.



St. Patrick's Purgatory and Lough-Derg.

CHAPTER VIII.

Influence of these legends on the literature of the sixteenth century —Vision of Lazarus — Scottish poets: Dunbar and Sir David Lindsay—Burlesques: Rabelais—Spanish ballads—English Ballads: the dead man's song.

THE age of visions may be said to have ended with the fifteenth century; but the influence of the popular notions to which they had given rise, and of those on which they were founded, continued long to be felt in certain classes of literature, and even at the present day, in our own country, it has not entirely ceased. The invention of printing, in the first instance, did much towards spreading this influence by multiplying copies and editions of the older legends of Owain, Tundale, St. Brandan, &c. In England several works appeared at the close of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries which tended to keep alive the belief in these grotesque though fearful pictures of the world to come. Among these one of the most remarkable was the English translation of the 'Pilgremage of the Sowle' of William de Deguilleville, printed by Caxton, in 1483. In France, about the end of the century, appeared a long poem, by a writer of the name of Damerval, entitled 'The great Devilry; which treats how Satan declared to his master, Lucifer, of the evils which the poor worldly men do, according to their estates, vocations,

trades, and merchandises, and how they draw them to damnation by an infinity of wiles.'* This is a singular book, full of grotesque conversation between Satan and Lucifer, and appears to have passed through many editions. It is a general satire on the vices of the time, and besides furnishing a vivid picture of the manners of the age, affords the same kind of materials for the history of the old popular notions concerning the demons as the work of Francis Eximenès did for the angels.

Another very popular work, published in France at the latter end of the fifteenth century, and almost immediately translated into English, was the 'Kalendrier des Bergers,' or 'Kalendar of Shepherdes,' which was reprinted frequently in both languages during the first half of the sixteenth century. It is a kind of perpetual almanac, containing, besides the calendar, a number of very miscellaneous articles in prose and verse. Among them is a description of the punishments of the seven deadly sins after death, said to have been exhibited to Lazarus between his death and resurrection. I have not met with this vision of Lazarus in any form anterior to this publication, and therefore suppose it to have been an invention of the time. It is accompanied by a series of woodcuts, exhibiting the punishment of the sinners of each several class, which in some of the English editions are remarkably bold and spirited. Lazarus beholds first the punishment of pride: "First, sayde Lazarus, I have seene in hell wheeles right

* La graunt diablerie: qui traicte comment Sathan fait demonstrance à son maistre Lucifer de tous les maulx que les povres mondains font selon leurs estatz, vocations, mestiers, et marchandises, et comment il les tire à dampnation par infinies cautelles.

hie, set on an hyll, the which was to looke on in maner of mylles, incessantly turning about by great impitiuosity, roring and whirling, as it were thunder. And the wheeles were fyxed full of hookes and crampions of iron and steele, and on them were hanged and turned the proud men and women for their pryde with their prynce, capitayne, and maister, Lucifer." Next comes envy: "Secondly, sayde Lazarus, I have seene in hell a fludde frosen as yce, wherin the envious men and women were plunged unto the navill, and then sodainly came over them ryght cold and a great wind, that greved and payned them ryght sore, and when they would evite and eschew the wonderfull blastes of the wynde, they plunged into the water with great shoutes and cryes lamentable to heare." Then anger: "Thirdly, sayd Lazarus, I have seene in hell a great cave, tenebrous and obscure, full of tables lyke buchers' stalles, or a great buchery, where as ireful men and women were thorow pearced with trenchynge-knyves and sharpe glayves and with long speares perced their bodyes, wherewith the most horryble and fearefull buchers of hel hewed and detrenched them with their glayves and knyves impiteously wythoute ceasing." "Fourthly, sayd Lazarus, I have seene in hel an horrible hall, darke and tenebrous, wherin was a great multitude of serpents, bygge and small, where as slouthfull men and women were tormented with bytings and stingings of venemous wormes, the which perced them through in divers parts of their bodies, wounding them to the hart with inextinguible payne." The fifth crime was covetousness: "Fyftly, sayde Lazarus, I have seene in the infernall partyes a great number of wyde cauderons and ketels full of boylynge leade and oile, wyth other hote metalles molten, in the whiche were plunged

and dypped the covetyse men and women, for to fulfill and replenish them of their insatiate covetise." The sixth, gluttony: "The vi. payne, sayde Lazarus, that I have sene in a vale a flodde foule and stynkinge at the brymme, in the which was a table with towels right dyshonestly, where as gluttons byn fedde with todes and other venemous beasts, and had to drinke of the water of the same sayde fludde." And the seventh, incontinence: "The vii. payne, sayde Lazarus, I have seen a feelde ful of depe welles replenyshed with fyre and sulphre, whereout issued smoke thycke and contagious, wherin all lecherous persons were tormented incessauntly with devyls." This was the order of the sins in the old Romish scale. The whole concludes with the colophon, "Thus endeth the vii. deadly sinnes, figured eche by him selfe, lyke as Lazarus had seene in the partes infernalles."

A little research would, without doubt, enable us to indicate several other publications of the same class which appeared about this period, but it is my intention to pass slightly and rapidly over this part of the subject. I have described the vision of Lazarus more particularly, because in subsequent writers who indulge in such pictures, we generally find the infernal punishments distributed according to the seven sins, in place of the more numerous and varied pains of the older visions. The Scottish poet Dunbar, who flourished at the beginning of the sixteenth century, has left us a poetical description of a dance of the seven 'deidly synnis' amid the infernal fires, as they are supposed to have been seen in a dream. Pride came first, tripping "throw skaldand fyre;" then followed Ire and his companions, cutting and slashing each other with swords and knives:—

"Sum upoun uder[1] with brandis beit,[2]
Sum jagit utheris to the heft[3]
With knyvis that scherp cowd schein."[4]

Next came Envy, followed by Covetousness, who led a band of misers, usurers, &c. The description of the punishment of these reminds us of the pictures drawn by the pencil of Callot:—

"Out of thair throttis thay schot on udder[1]
Hett[5] moltin gold, me thocht, a fudder,[6]
As fyre-flawcht[7] maist fervent;
Ay as thay tumit[8] thame of schot,
Feyndis fild thame new up to the thrott
With gold of allkin prent."[9]

The other three sins were Idleness, Incontinence, and Gluttony. We have seen on a former occasion (p. 49,) that minstrels were excluded from the domains of Pluto: the seven "synnis" had little music:—

"Na menstrallis playit to thame but[10] dowt,
For glemen thair wer haldin owt,
Be day and eik by nycht."

Another Scottish poet, a little more modern, though partly contemporary, Sir David Lindsay, has also left us a dream. In his vision, a lady, who named herself Dame Remembrance, took him with her first to the centre of the earth:—

"Down throw the eirth in middis of the center,
Or ever I wist, into the lawest hell:
And in that cairfu! cove[11] quhen we did enter,
Yowting[12] and yowling we hard, with monie yell,
In flamme of fyre richt furious and fell,

---

[1] other [or swords
[2] struck with brands,
[3] stabbed others to the hilt
[4] cut
[5] hot
[6] a fother
[7] wild-fire, or lightning
[8] emptied
[9] every kind of impression (all kind of coin)
[10] without
[11] cave [12] screaming

Was cryand[1] mony cairful[2] creature,
Blasphemand God, and waryand[3] nature."

Here they see popes and prelates, as well as secular princes, with numbers of the clergy, which gives occasion for a bitter invective against the corruptions and abuses in the church. After observing all the different classes of sinners, and the punishments to which they were subjected, the poet was carried to a "country" a little above the pit of hell, but still within the earth: it was purgatory:—

"A lytil above that dolorous doungeoun,
We enterit in ane cuntry full of cair,
Quhair[4] that we saw mony ane legioun
Greitand and gowland[5] with mony ruthfull rair:[6]
'Quhat place is that,' quod I, 'of blis sa bair?'
Scho[7] answerit and said, 'Purgatorie,
Quhilk[8] purgis saulis or thay cum to glorie.'"

A little above purgatory was a third place, where "mony babbis war makand drery mone," and where they were to remain for ever in sorrow, because they had not been baptized. Above this he saw a "vault," which was the limbus of the patriarchs and ancients. Then they passed through the earth, the water, and the air, and through the nine spheres, to heaven. The poet subsequently passed over the different regions of the earth, and saw paradise in the east, surrounded by lofty walls of fire:—

"This paradise of all plesour repleit,[9]
Situate I saw to the Orient;
That glorious garth[10] of every flouris did fleit,[11]
The lustie lilleis, the rosis redolent,
Fresch hailsum[12] frutes indeficient,
Baith herb and tree there growis ever grene,
Throw vertew of the temperate air serene."

---

[1] crying
[2] full of care or sorrow
[3] cursing
[4] where
[5] crying and howling
[6] clamour, din
[7] she
[8] which
[9] replete, filled with
[10] garden
[11] flow
[12] producing health

Early in this century there sprung up in France a sect of scoffers, represented by Rabelais, true imitators of the old school of Lucian. Rabelais and his imitators frequently burlesques the existing popular notions concerning the infernal regions. In the thirtieth chapter of the second book of Pantagruel, we are told "how Epistemon, who had his head cut off, was skilfully cured by Panurge, and of the news he brought of the devils and of the damned." In the hell of Epistemon, everything was turned upside down: all the great kings and heroes of this world were employed in low occupations. Alexander the Great gained his living by mending old breeches; Xerxes sold mustard; Cyrus was a cowherd; Eneas was a miller: Darius a cleaner of water-closets; and Priam sold old clothes. The philosophers of this world became great lords, and lived magnificently. Among the imitations of Rabelais, most of them rare tracts and not easily met with, occur as titles, 'The New Panurge, with his navigation to the imaginary island, his recovering his youth therein, with the journey of his spirit to the other world;'* 'The very eloquent Pandarnassus, . . . who was transported into fairy-land by Oberon;' &c.

But in spite of the influence of this class of writers, the old popular superstitions kept their hold upon the minds of the uneducated classes; and down to a very recent period they continued to be spread and encouraged by the Roman Catholic priesthood in France, as we have seen in the instance of St. Patrick's Purgatory. In Italy, I believe, they are still taught in their grossest forms. This was also the case in Spain, as long as the monks retained their influence.

* 'Le nouveau Panurge, avec sa nauigation en lisle imaginaire, son rajeunissement en ycelle, et le voyage que fait son esperit en l'aultre monde; ensemble une exacte obseruation des merueilles par luy veues.' 12°, La Rochelle, Michel Guillard. Without date.

Among the Spanish ballads in the British Museum, there are several which treat of the punishments of purgatory. One of these is entitled, 'Stanzas pitiful, devout, and contemplative, in which are considered the great torments, pains, and troubles which are suffered by the blessed souls in the pains of purgatory."* Another is called 'A Spiritual Romance, in which are declared the great pains which the souls suffer in purgatory.'† And a third bears the title of a 'Memorial, presented with lamentable groans and tender sighs by the blessed and afflicted souls of purgatory, to Christian piety and Catholic devotion, to kindle the fervent affection which they have always shown to the burning spouses of Christ.'‡ This latter ballad appears to have been intended to incite the charity of the living to contribute liberally towards saying masses for the dead: in the following lines the writer tells us how the poor souls are burning in the flames, some in pits of fire, others in fiery lakes, and others placed in rivers congealed with frost and ice, others again torn to pieces by serpents and wild beasts, and others tormented with the stench of "horrible smoke:"—

* 'Coplas bastimosas, devotas, y contemplativas, en que se ponderan los grandes tormentos, dolores, y trabajos, que estàn padeciendo las animas benditas en penas del Purgatorio,' &c. Valencia, without date, but apparently printed towards the middle of the eighteenth century.

† Romance espiritual, donde se refieren las muchas penas que padecen las almas en el Purgatorio,' &c. Valencia, without date, but contemporary with the preceding.

‡ 'Memorial, que con lamentables sollozos y tiernos gemidos presentan las benitas y afligidas almas del Purgatorio ante la piedad Christiana y Catholica devocion, para encenderlos en el fervoroso afecto, que han tenido siempre à las abrasadas esposas de Christo.' By Juan de Olmedo. Madrid, 1761.

"Consideramos à todas
en las llamas abrasando:
en simas de fuego unas;
otras en fuegos y lagos;
y otras metidas en rios
de frio y hielo quajado:
à otras sierpes y fieras
las estàn despedazando;
horroroso humo à otras
atormentan el olfato."

In England, after the Reformation, purgatory was banished; but in other respects the old popular belief long retained a certain degree of hold on people's minds. Ford the dramatist, at the end of the sixteenth century, introduces on the stage one of his characters describing the place where—

"Dwell many thousand thousand sundry sorts
Of never-dying deaths; there damned souls
Roar without pity; there are gluttons fed
With toads and adders; there is burning oil
Pour'd down the drunkard's throat; the usurer
Is forced to sup whole draughts of molten gold;
There is the murderer for ever stabb'd,
Yet can he never die; there lies the wanton
On racks of burning steel, whilst in his soul
He feels the torment of his raging lust."

It is true that this description is put into the mouth of a friar. But it appears that ballads, not very dissimilar in their style to the Spanish ballads just mentioned, continued to circulate in England as late as the seventeenth century, and perhaps even to a more recent period. One of the most remarkable of these productions is a black-letter broadside, entitled 'The Dead Man's Song, whose dwelling was neere unto Bassings Hall, in London,' of which several copies are preserved, and which has been reprinted

in Ritson's 'Ancient Songs.' The hero of this ballad, like those of the old purgatory legends, fell into a trance, and appeared to be dead during the his vision. When he became insensible to the world, he found himself in a green field, covered with flowers, where a "faire young man addressed him, and bade him sit beside him on "a goodly pleasant banke." During the vision they did not quit this spot:

"With branches then of lillies white
Mine eyes there wiped he;
When this was done he bad me look
What I farre off could see.

I looked up, and loe at last
I did a city see,
So faire a thing did never man
Behold with mortall eye.

Of diamonds, pearles, and precious stones,
It seemd the walls were made;
The houses all with beaten gold
Were til'd and overlaid.

More brighter than the morning sun
The light thereof did show,
And every creature in the same
Like crowned kings did goe.

The fields about this city faire
Were all with roses set,
Gilly-flowers and carnations faire,
Which canker could not fret.

And from these fields there did proceed
The sweet'st and pleasant'st smell
That ever living creature felt,
The scent did so excell."

In this city was "musick, mirth, and melody;" and he was told that it was heaven. He was then made to turn his head and look in the opposite direction, where he saw

the punishments of the wicked, which resemble very closely those of the older legends.

"With that I saw a cole-blacke den,
All tand with soot and smoake,
Where stinking brimstone burning was,
Which made me like to choake.

An ugly creature there I saw,
Whose face with knives was slasht,
And in a caldron of poysond filth
His ugly corps were washt.

About his necke were fiery ruffes,
That flam'd on every side;
I askt, and lo the young man said,
That he was damn'd for pride."

Others he saw torn by vipers. The covetuous were placed in "burning boats," and ladles full of melted gold were poured down their throats. Gluttons were fed with toads. The incontinent were tormented on burning beds. Murderers were continually stabbed, and compelled to drink corrupt blood. Swearers and liars were hung up by the tongues.

"And therewithall, from ugly hell,
Such shriekes and cryes I heard,
As though some greater griefe and plague
Had vext them afterward.

So that my soul was sore afraid,
Such terrour on me fell:
Away then went the young man quite,
And bad me not farewell.

Wherefore unto my body straight
My spirit return'd againe,
And lively blood did afterwards
Stretch forth in every veine."

APPENDIX

OF

ILLUSTRATIVE PIECES.

ICELANDIC VISION.

[Réferred to at p. 6. Extracted from the Edda of Sæmundr, compiled in the eleventh century. It contains a remarkable mixture of ideas taken from the ancient mythology of the north. The *gygiars* were infernal nymphs; there was supposed to be a sun to the under world as well as to the upper. The *seven lower worlds*, the *sun's hart or stag*, the *seven 'nidia sonu,'* the feeding upon earth or dust, *Fegiarn* the prince of the shades, are all taken from the same source.]

Solar Lioþ.	Song of the Sun.
. . . .	. . . .
A Norna stóli	In the Norni's seat
sat ek niv daga;	sat I nine days;
þaþan var ek á hest hafinn;	thence I was carried on a horse;
Gy'giar sól	the sun of the Gygiars
er skein grimmliga	shone grimly
or sky'-drupnis sky'lom.	out of the apertures of the clouds
Utan ok innan	Without and within
þóttumz ek alla fara	I seemed to go through all
sigr heima siö;	the seven lower worlds;
uppi ok niþri	above and below
leitaþi ek æþra vegar,	sought I a better way, [journey.
hvar mer væri greiþastar götur.	where I might have a more agreeable

Frá þvì er at segia
hvat ek fyrst um sá,
þá ek var í kvöl-heima kominn;
suiþnir fuglar,
er sálir voru,
flugu sua margir sem my'.

I must relate
what I first saw, [torment
when I was come into the places of
scorched birds,
which were souls,
fled numerous as flies.

Vestan sá ek fliúga
vonar dreka,
ok fella glæ-valls götu;
vængi þeir skóku,
sua víþa mer þótti
spríngа hauþur ek himinn.

From the west saw I fly
the dragons of expectation, [ful;
and open the way of the fire-power-
they beat their wings,
so that every where it appeared to me
that earth and heaven burst.

Sólar-hiört
leit ek sunnan fara,
hann tey'mdu tueir saman:
fætur hans
stóþu folldu á,
enn tóku horn til himins.

The sun's hart
I saw go from the south,
him led two together:
his feet
stood on the ground,
and his horns touched heaven.

Norþan sá ek ríþa
niþia sonu,
ok váru siö saman;
hornum fullum
drukku þeir inn hreina miöþ
ur brunni baug-regins

From the north saw I ride
the people's sons,
and they were seven together;
with full horns
they drunk the pure mead
from the fountain of heaven's lord.

Vindr þagþi,
vautn stauþuaþi;
þá heyrþa ek grimmligan gny:
sínum mönnum
suipvísar konur
mólu molld til matar.

The wind became quiet,
the waters ceased to flow;
then heard I a fearful sound:
for their husbands
shameless women
ground earth to food.

Drey'rga steina
þær hinar daukkvu konur
dróv daprliga;

Bloody stones
those dark women
dragged sorrowfully;

blóþug hiörtu hengu þeim
fyri briósti utan
mædd viþ miklom trega.

their bleeding hearts hung
out of their breasts,
weary with much grief.

Margan mann sá ek
meiddan fara
á þeim gleddu gautum;
andlit þeirra
þottu mer anli vera
ry'giar blóþi roþin.

Many men saw I
wounded go
in the ways strewed with hot cinders;
their faces
seemed to me all to be
red with smoking blood.

Marga menn sá ek
moldar gengna
þá er ei máttu þiónustu ná;
heiþnar stiörnur
stóþu yfir haufþi þeim,
fáþar feikn-stöfum.

Many men saw I
go on the ground [Lord's meal;
who had been unable to obtain the
heathen stars
stood over their heads,
painted with fearful characters.

Menn sá ek þá
er mlög ala
aufund um annars hagi;
blóþgar rúnir
váru á briosti þeim
merktar meinliga

Those men saw I
who cherish much
envy at others' fortune;
bloody runes
were on their breasts
marked painfully.

Menn sá ek þar
marga ú-fegna,
þeir vóro allir villir vega;
þat kaupir sa,
er þessa heims
apaz at ú-beillum.

Men saw I there
many, without joy,
who all wandered pathless;
that he purchases for himself,
who of this world
is infatuated with the vices.

Menn sá ek þá,
er mörgum lutum
vældu um annars eign;
flockom þeir fóru
til Fegiarns borgar,
ok haufþu byrþar af bly'i.

Those men saw I,
who in many ways
laid their hands on other's property;
they went in flocks
to Fegiarn's (Satan's) city,
and had burthens of lead.

Menn sá ek þá,
er margan haufþu
fe ok fiörvi rænt;
brióst i gegnum
rendu braugnum þeim
öflugir eitr-dreker.

Men sá ek þá,
er minst villdu
halda helga daga;
hendur þeirra
váru á heitum steinum
negldar naudliga.

Menn sá ek þá,
er af miki-læti
virduz vonum framar;
klæþi þeirra
váru ky'miliga
elldi um-slegin.

Menn sá ek þá
er margt haufþu
orþ á annan logit:
heliar hrafnar
or haufþi þeim
sárliga sióndr slitu.

Allar ógnir
fær þú eigi vitat
þær sem hel-gengnir hafa.
Sætar syndir
verþa at sárum bótum;
æ koma mein eptir munuþ.

Men sá ek þá,
er margt haufþu
gefit ad Guþs lögum;

Those men saw I,
who many had
deprived of money and life;
through their breasts
suddenly pierced
strong venomous dragons.

Those men saw I,
who would not
keep holy days;
their hands
were on hot stones
nailed tight.

Those men saw I,
who in much pride
magnified themselves too much;
their garments
were in derision
with fire surrounded.

Those men saw I,
who had many
words against another lied:
hell's ravens
out of their heads
cruelly tore their eyes.

All the horrors
you cannot know
which the hell-goers have.
Sweet sins
go to cruel recompenses;
ever cometh moan after pleasure.

Those men saw I
who much had
given according to God's laws;

hreinir kyndlar
váru yfir hauſþi þeim
brendir biartliga.

clear candles
were over their heads
burning brightly.

Menn sá ek þá,
er af miklum hug
veittu fá-tækum frama;
lásu englar
helgar bækur
yfir hauſþi þeim.

Those men saw I,
who magnanimously
improved the condition of the poor;
angels read
the holy books
over their heads.

Menn sá ek þá,
er miök hauſþu
húngri farit haurund;
englar Guþs
lutu aullum þeim;
þat er ædzta unad.

Those men saw I,
who had much
their body lean with fasting;
God's angels
bowed before all these;
that is the greatest pleasure.

Men sá ek þá,
er móþur hauſþu
látiþ mat í munn;
huílur þeirra váru
á himin-geislum
hafþar hagliga.

Those men saw I,
who to their mother had
put food in the mouth;
their resting places were
in the beams of heaven
placed agreeably.

Helgar meyiar
hauſþu hreinliga
sál af syndum þuegit,
manna þeirra
er á mörgum degi
pina sialfa sik.

Holy virgins
had purely
washed the soul of sins,
of those men
who many a day
punish themselves.

Hávar reiþar
sá ek meþ himnum fara,
þær eiga götur til Guþs;
menn þeim sty'ra
er myrþir eru
allz for eingar sakir.

Lofty cars
I saw go midst heaven,
which had the roads to God;
men guide them
who were slain
entirely without fault.

Hinn máttki Faþir,
mesti Sonr,
Heilagr andi himins,
þik biþr ek skilia,
er skapat hefir,
oss alla eymdum frá!
• • •

O mighty Father,
most great Son,
Holy Ghost of heaven,
I pray thee to save
(who didst create)
us all from miseries!
• • •

AN EARLY BURLESQUE.

[Referred to at p. 23. It is taken from a manuscript in the public library of the University of Cambridge, Gg. V, 35. Since I copied it for the present Essay, it has been printed in the 'Altdeutsche Blätter,' vol. i, p. 390, and by Grimm and Schmeller, 'Lateinische Gedichte,' p. 335. Heriger was archbishop of Mentz from 912 to 926. In the description of this song, I observe that I have called Heriger *prefect*, instead of archbishop, having quoted by memory, and read *præfectus* instead of *antistes*.]

Heriger, urbis
Maguntiacensis
antistes, quendam
vidit prophetam,
qui ad infernum
se dixit raptum.

Heriger, of the city
of Mentz
archbishop, saw
a certain prophet,
who said that he
had been rapt to hell.

Inde cum multas
referret causas,
subjunxit totum
esse infernum
accinctum densis
undique silvis.

When he had related
many things of it,
he added that
all hell was
surrounded on every side
with thick woods.

Heriger illi
ridens respondit,
"Meum subulcum
illuc ad pastum
volo cum macris
mittere porcis."

Heriger to him
smiling answered,
"I will my swineherd
thither to pasture
send with
my lean pigs."

Vir ait falsus,
" Fui translatus
in templum cœli,
Christumque vidi
lætum sedentem
et comedentem.

Johannes Baptista
erat pincerna,
atque præclari
pocula vini
porrexit cunctis
vocatis sanctis."*

Heriger ait,
" Prudenter egit
Christus, Johannem
ponens pincernam,
quoniam vinum
non bibit unquam.

Mendax probaris,
cum Petrum dicis
illuc magistrum
esse cocorum,
est quia summi
janitor cœli.

Honore quali
te Deus cœli
habuit ibi?
ubi sedisti?
volo ut narres
quid manducasses."

Says the false man,
" I was carried thence
to the temple of heaven,
and saw Christ
sitting in joy
and eating.

John the Baptist
was the butler,
and offered
cups of excellent wine
to all the saints
who were invited."*

Heriger said,
" Christ acted
prudently, in making
John his butler,
since he never
drank wine.

You prove yourself a liar,
when you say that Peter
is there master
of the cooks,
because he is the porter
of high heaven.

In what honour
did God of heaven
have thee there?
where didst thou sit?
I desire you tell me
what you eat."

* A stanza is evidently lost here, in which it was stated that St. Peter was master of the cooks.

Respondit homo,
" Angulo uno
partem pulmonis
furabar cocis:
hoc manducavi,
atque recessi."

Heriger illum
jussit ad palum
loris ligari,
scopisque cædi,
sermone duro
hunc arguendo:

" Si te ad suum
invitet pastum
Christus, ut secum
capias cibum,
cave ne furtum
facias [iterum]."

The man answered,
" In one corner
part of a liver
I stole from the cooks:
this I eat,
and then retired."

Heriger ordered
him to be bound
with thongs to a stake,
and to be beaten with rods,
with hard speech
charging him:

" If thee Christ
to his meal
invite, with him
to take food,
take care not to commit
theft again."

ANGLO-SAXON DESCRIPTION OF PARADISE.

[From the metrical version of the Latin poem *de Phœnice* ascribed to Lactantius, in the Exeter Book, p. 197, ed. Thorpe. It is referred to at p. 26 of the present volume. This poem is at least as old as the earlier part of the eleventh century, and probably more ancient.]

Hæbbe ic ge-frugnen,	I have heard tell,
þætte is feor heonan	that there is far hence
east-dælum on	in eastern parts
æþelast londa,	a land most noble,
firum ge-fræge;	amongst men renowned.
Nis se foldan sceat	That tract of earth is not
ofer middan-geard	over mid-earth
mongum ge-fere	fellow to many
folc-agendra;	peopled lands;
ac he afyrred is,	but it is withdrawn
þurh meotudes meaht	through the creator's might
mán-fremmendum.	from wicked doers.
Wlitig is se wong eall,	Beauteous is all the plain,
wynnum ge-blissad,	with delights blessed,
mid þam fægrestum	with the sweetest
foldan stencum:	of earth's odours:
ænlic is þæt iglond,	unique is that island,
æþele se wyrta,	noble the maker,
modig, meahtum spedig,	lofty, in powers abounding,
se þa moldan ge-sette.	who the land founded.
ðær bið oft open	There is oft open
eadgum to-geanes,	towards the happy,
onbliden (bleoþra wyn!)	unclosed, (delight of sounds!)
heofon-rices duru.	heaven-kingdom's door.

þæt is wynsum wong,
wealdas grene,
rume under roderum;
ne mæg þær ren ne snaw,
ne forstes fnæst,
ne fyres blæst,
ne hægles hryre,
ne hrimes dryre,
ne sunnan hætu,
ne sin caldu,
ne wearm weder
ne winter-scur,
wihte ge-wyrdan;
ac se wong seomaþ
eadig and onsund.
Is þæt æþele lond
blostmum ge-blowen:
beorgas þær ne muntas
steape ne stondaþ,
ne stán-clifu
heah hlifiaþ,
swa her mid us;
ne dene ne dalu,
ne dun-scrafu,
hlæwas ne hlincas;
ne þær hleonaþ óo
unsmeþes wiht,
ac se æþela feld
wridaþ under wolcnum
wynnum ge-blowen.
Is þæt torhte lond
twelfum herra
folde fæðm-rimes,
(swa us ge-freogun gleawe,
witgan þurh wisdom
on ge-writum cyþaþ,)
þonne ænig þara beorga

That is a pleasant plain,
green wolds,
spacious under heaven;
there may not rain nor snow,
nor rage of frost,
nor fire's blast,
nor fall of hail,
nor descent of rime,
nor heat of sun,
nor perpetual cold,
nor warm weather,
nor winter shower,
aught injure;
but the plain rests
happy and healthful.
That noble land is
with blossoms flowered:
nor hills nor mountains there
stand steep,
nor stony cliffs
tower high,
as here with us;
nor dells nor dales,
nor mountain-caves,
risings nor hilly chains;
nor thereon rests
aught unsmooth,
but the noble field
flourishes under the skies
with delights blooming.
That glorious land is
higher by twelve
fold of fathom measure,
(as us the skilful have informed,
sages through wisdom
in writings show,)
than any of those hills

þe her beorhte mid us	that brightly here with us
heá hliflaþ,	tower high,
under heofon-tunglum.	under the stars of heaven.
Smylte is se sige-wong,	Serene is the glorious plain,
sun-bearo lixeþ,	the sunny bower glitters,
wu.lu-holt, wynlic;	the woody holt, joyously;
wæstmas ne dreosaþ,	the fruits fall not,
beorhte blede,	the bright products,
ac þa beamas á	but the trees ever
grene stondaþ,	stand green,
swa him God bibead;	as them God hath commanded;
wintres and sumeres	in winter and in summer
wudu biþ ge-lice	the forest is alike
bledum ge-hongen,	hung with fruits,
næfre brosniaþ	never fade
leaf under lyfte,	the leaves in air,
ne him lig aceþeþ,	nor will flame them injure,
æfre to ealdre,	ever throughout ages,
ær þon edwenden	ere that an end
worulde ge-weorþe.	to the world shall be.
Swa iu wætres þrym	What time of old the water's mass
ealne middan-geard,	all mid-earth,
mere-flod þeahte	the sea-flood decked
eorþan ymb-hwyrft,	the earth's circumference,
þa se æþela wong	then the noble plain
æghwæs onsund	in all ways secure
wiþ yþ-fare	against the billowy course
ge-healden stod,	stood preserved,
hreora wæga,	of the rough waves,
eadig, unwemme,	happy, inviolate,
þurh est Godes:	through God's favour:
bideþ swa ge-blowen,	it shall abide thus blooming,
oð bæles cyme	until the coming of the fire
Dryhtnes domes;	of the Lord's doom;
þonne deaþ-ræced,	when the death-houses,
hæleþa heolstor-cofan,	men's dark chambers,
onhliden weorþaþ.	shall be opened.

Nis þær on þam londe
laþ ge-niðla,
ne wop ne wracu,
wea-tacen nan,
yldu ne yrmðu,
ne se enga deaþ,
ne lifes lyre,
ne laþes cyme,
ne synn ne sacu,
ne sar wracu,
ne wædle ge-win,
ne welan onsyn,
ne sorg ne slæp,
ne swar leger,
ne winter ge-weorp,
ne wedra ge-bregd
hreoh under heofonum,
ne se hearda forst
caldum cyle-gicelum
cnyseð ænigne.
þær ne hægl ne hrim
hreosað to foldan,
ne windig wolcen,
ne þær wæter fealleþ
lyfte ge-bysgad,
ac þær lagu-streamas
wundrum wrætlice,
wyllan onspringaþ
fægrum fold-wylmum.
Foldan leccaþ
wæter wynsumu
of þæs wuda midle;
þa monþa ge-hwam
of þære moldan tyrf
brim-cald brecaþ,
bearo ealne geond-faraþ
þragum þrymlice.

There is not in that land
hateful enmity,
nor wail nor vengeance,
evil-token none,
old age nor misery,
nor the narrow death,
nor loss of life,
nor coming of enemy,
nor sin nor strife,
nor painful exile,
nor poor man's toil,
nor desire of wealth,
nor care nor sleep,
nor grievous sickness,
nor winter's darts,
nor dread of tempests
rough under heaven,
nor the hard frost
with cold chill icicles
striketh any.
There nor hail nor rime
on the land descend,
nor windy cloud,
nor there water falls
agitated in air,
but there liquid streams
wonderously curious,
wells spring forth
with fair bubblings from earth;
o'er the soil glide
pleasant waters
from the middle of the wood;
there each month
from the turf of earth
sea-cold they burst,
all the grove pervade
at times abundantly.

Is þæt þeodnes ge-bod,
þætte twelf-siþum
þæt tir-fæste lond
geond-lace
lagu-floda-wynn.
Sindon þa bearwas
bledum ge-hongene,
wlitigum wæstmum;
þær nó wanias ó
halge under heofonum
holtes frætwe,
ne fealla þær on foldan
fealwe blostman,
wudu-beama wlite;
ac þær wrætlice
on þam treowum symle
telgan ge-bladene,
ofett edniwe,
in ealle tid
on þam græs-wonge
grene stondaþ,
ge-broden hyhtlice
haliges meahtum,
beorhtast bearwa!
No ge-brocen weorþeð
holt on hiwe;
þær se halga stenc
wunaþ geond wyn-lond.
þæt onwended ne bið
æfre to ealdre,
ær þon endige
frod fyrn ge-weorc
se hit on frymþe ge-scop.

It is God's behest,
that twelve times
the glorious land
sports over
the joy of water-floods.
The groves are
with produce hung,
with beauteous fruits;
there fade not
holy under heaven
the wood's ornaments,
nor fall there on earth
the fallow blossoms,
beauty of forest-trees,
but there wondrously
on the trees ever
the laden branches,
the fruit renovated,
at all times
on the grassy plain
stand green,
gloriously adorned
through the might of the holy one,
brightest of groves!
Not broken is
the wood in aspect:
there a holy fragrance
rests o'er the pleasant land.
That shall not be changed
for ever throughout ages,
until shall end
his wise work of yore
he who created it at the beginning.

GERMAN BALLAD ON PARADISE.

[Translated from 'Ballades et Chants Populaires (Anciens et Modernes) de l'Allemagne, Traduction nouvelle, par Seb. Albin." The lady who, as I understand, has published the volume under this pseudonyme, has not indicated her sources for the older popular ballads, so that I have not been able to refer to the original, and merely translate from the French. I give this ballad as an excellent example how the old popular notions under the Roman Catholics were constantly running into burlesque.]

After the cross and sufferings, the pleasures of heaven will come to console us. Therefore let us sing of heavenly things, of which each of us will taste after he has divested himself of the old Adam.

We lead a life of angels, and we are at the same time very gay; we dance and we leap, we gambol and we sing. St. Peter looks at us in heaven and plays on the fiddle to us.

John lets loose a little sheep, Herod the butcher watches it. Roasted pigeons, believe me, fly into the open mouth. He who pays no attention to them is but an idler.

St. Luke kills his ox without reflection and without respect. The wine does not cost a farthing in heaven's cellar; the angels make loaves and biscuits at ever command.

Vegetables of every kind grow in the garden of heaven; peas and carrots, they grow spontaneously; the asparagus is as large as one's leg, and the artichokes are of the size of people's heads.

Good apples, good pears, good grapes, the gardener of heaven lets you gather them all. Wilt thou have kids, wilt thou have hares? They come running to the kitchen. Come, sharpen thy knife.

If it be fast-day, the fishes come swimming. St. Peter runs with his nets and his bait, and he begins fishing to please your palate.

Wilt thou have carp, trout, or pike? good cod or fresh sprats? Wilt thou have them cooked on the gridiron on which St. Laurence suffered martyrdom? St. Martha is the cook, and St. Urban the cup-bearer.

No music on earth can be compared with ours; the eleven thousand virgins dance, and St. Ursula looks on and laughs; the festivity lasts till late in the night.

Cecilia causes a little song without equal to be sung; angelic voices awake the senses, and when we think that all is finished, it begins again.

FINIS.

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